

MAN'S

3

Terrene-Refuge  
**SLEIGHTED:**  
AND THE  
**EXCELLENCY**  
OF  
**CELESTIAL**

*Concernments briefly*

**ASSERTED,**

By R I C. W A R D E Gent.  
And directed to his worthy  
Friend in a Letter.

---

Eccles. 4. 6.

*Better is an hand-full with quietnesse, then  
boith the hands full with travel and vexation.  
of spirit.*

I Tim. 6. 6.

*Godlinesse with contentment is great gain.*

---

L O N D O N,  
Printed by H. H. for Henry Seile 1651.



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## *To the Reader.*

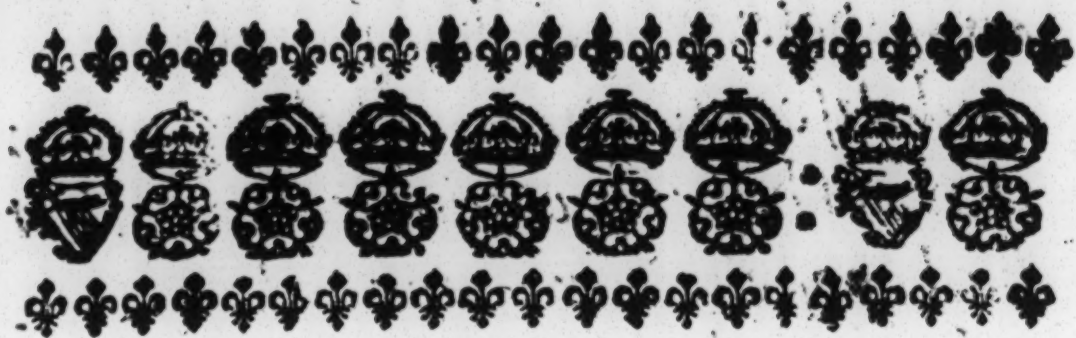


As the ensuing tract was composed at the immediate instance of, principally intended for, and directed to a private friend: so I knew not but that it might have been confin'd to his closet. For my own part, I had cause enough to account it unworthy of a publique view; or to look forth into an age, wherein so little passeth that is not lyable to censure. Nor am I ignorant, that whatever becomes obvious, (unlesse it appear in a polite dresse) is esteemed contemptible. Nevertheless, no sooner was my pen and this paper divorced, but (through some secret intelligence, or (as I conceive) collateral knowledge of the thing) I met with importunities, more then a few, to exact my consent, for its publication. But how little proportion that held with my desire, those with whom I contested can readily witnesse. For, as I was willing to continue at a just distance, from any thoughts of sacrificing to my own net: so I could have been well satisfi'd this had slept in a single manuscript. Yet whatsoever I asserted in my own defence, wanted efficacy to satisfy my friends. Nothing lesse then an absolute grant of this




particular, would suffice. Therefore being cast upon this strait, I rather chose to strike sail, as an argument of my condescension; then expose my self to the hazard of a farther encounter; & thereupon resolved to revise, and cloath it, with some additional thoughts. For (as empty vessels are most receptive: so) I was very sensible 'twas not only capable of correction, but repletion too, as being the bare issue of some broken houres; yet herein was I much prevented, the copy having continued sometime forth of my hands, upon enquiry, I found it committed to the presse with greater expedition then I expected, although it was very requisite, both in reference to my self and others, it should not have seen the world, unlesse in a better habit. But since it will abroad, as I have no ground to commend it: so no prevailing faculty to indulge it to thee, only transfer it to thy favorable view. And if thou maist imagine it worth a leisure hour, it's freely at thy devotion; and so farewell.

R. W.



# The P R E F A C E.

SIR,

OU Know it is not long, since you were pleased to expresse a very deep and deplorable sense of the distractions, and discontents that were too apparently predominant in the spirits of private men; especially when it was evident, that the wonder-working-hand of God, was immediately pointing at some very remarkable design that had reference to his Church and People. And that which amaz'd you was, that mens eyes were not fixt upon it, but their minds carried on to



an impetuous height of Impatience  
and discomposure; I told you then  
it was the same consideration, that  
had possessed my owne thoughts,  
wherein (by a private discussion or  
(as it were) a self-Conference) they  
had assumed a large Liberty: upon  
which acknowledgement, it was  
your pleasure to command some-  
thing from me upon this subject;  
whereunto I made no positive pro-  
mise; for what might principally  
induce you to this, I knew not, nei-  
ther did I then, nor do I yet ima-  
gine, unlesse it were that small ac-  
count I once gave you upon another  
particular.

Whereupon returning to my  
Chamber, I was reduced to this Di-  
lemma: Either I must dispence with  
your commands, (the thoughts  
whereof had a strict influence upon  
me) or else I must appear in a work,  
whereto I was deeply sensible of my  
insufficiency; so that to disobey  
your

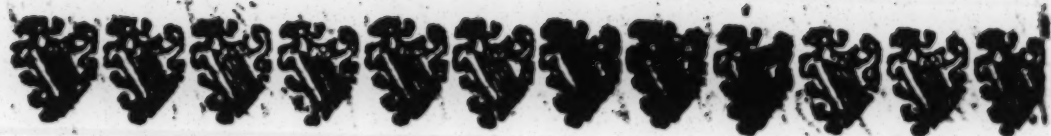


your Injunction, or to frame the thoughts, I told you of, into words, and then digest those into a method fit for your view, both, to me were extremely difficult. By this you may easily judge, what conflict I had with my self; yet at last I resolved upon obedience, concluding that the safest course, though other respects urged me to decline it. And although I cannot in the least measure pretend to any proficiency in, or aptnesse to a Task of this Nature; yet I am willing to extend that power I have to its limit, and humbly pray it may be serviceable.

What I offer in obedience to your Command, shall be no otherwise presented then in this Epistle; And that which you pleased to hint ( in these words, ) He that casts his eye upon past experiments, may observe, That sometime a cure hath been wrought by very lowe and contemptible



*Meanes and Instruments, that  
hath been given over as desperate,  
by Persons of more profound  
knowledge and riper judgement,  
shall (without any further Apo-  
logy, ) be my Encouragement to  
proceed as followeth.*



*The*





## The Introduction.



Apprehend the greatest part of the Christian world groaning under the heavy burden of trouble and discontent, and (being now in travel) labours with no less extremity of peril, then pangs, to be delivered.

And although many of us may be apt to plead, that we have been so far from declining, as that we have laid hold upon every occasion, and endeavoured to make a faithful improvement of all probable means that might tend to *over-rule* the torrent, and give stop to its violence: Yet I humbly say, that it's much *below* the power of any *Mortall* to conquer in such conflicts, without a great measure of Divine assistance; and I am confident, that *many* by their frequent addresses, have solicited at Heavens Throne in that particular; Yet how-



however the Almighty may, for many causes best known to himself, for a time suspend his help, though not absolutely deny it, and also for some respects that fall within our knowledge. For it's not improbable, God does it to the end we may continue in a state of dependance on him, that so, not onely those other heavenly graces, that the Lord out of his immeasurable *bounty* hath vouchsafed us, but our faith also may be exercised, which is very acceptable and well-pleasing to his sacred Majesty.

And although we have formerly sent up our supplications to Heaven for aide; perhaps we have at that very time, for our hearts are deceitfull beyond measure, had regard to something *on earth*, that in our apprehension seemed to hold forth *satisfaction*.

Now this ground alone were enough to cause a suspension of help. For Almighty God out of a tender regard to his glory, will not suffer any earthly thing to come in *competition* with heavenly; and as he would have his own way and meanes used towards the accomplishing every end,  
to



(3)

so his holy Name chiefly glorified. But in regard I shall have occasion to speak more to this purpose, before I period my Epistle, I will in the next place endeavour to *make* inquiry after the causes, that might possibly usher in our discontents, and use my best diligence to remove them, that so the effects may cease.



*Twenty Quæres propounded.*

1. **A**Nd first, it will become us to enter into an exact scrutiny with our own hearts, and ask our souls this question: Whether we have not set an over-endearing value upon *sublunary things*, and upon that score, contrary to *intent and purpose* of the great Creator and most wise *Disposer*, advanced the servant above the master?

2. Let us presse to know, how our hearts have *stood affected* to *that* which the world calls riches, then which nothing imaginable is more apt to attract the affections and seize upon the souls faculties, and thereby work a diversion from matters of a more high and heavenly concernment?

3. Have



(4)

3. Have we not said within our selves, that without riches men are confin'd to a state of Penury, and therefore misery, and that in respect of their possession, the esteem of men in their daies ebs and flowes proportionably?

4. Hath it not troubled our spirits, that the sole Giver of all things, hath vouchsafed a larger Almes or distribution thereof to others, which in our apprehension, have lesse deserved then our selves; or advanced them to higher places of honour and repute, in respect of their authority amongst men, and thereupon our eye hath become evil, because our heavenly Fathers was good?

5. Have we not given up our selves to an over-solicitous and indirect seeking after these momentary trifles?

6. Have we not conniv'd at our own hearts, when they have bin ready to converse with fraud and entertain conference with oppression, or embrace any other sinister course for the acquiring of worldly wealth?

7. Have we not employed our wits and abilities in procuring thereof, at such times and seasons, which God out of his wisdom hath appointed more immediately for



for the sacred duties and performances that chiefly refer to *his glory*?

8. Or at such a *time* when for the crying sins of a people, *Judgement* and *Calamity* is *threatned*, and is even ready to seize on every *Family* and *Person* in a *Nation*? For alas, when we should endeavour by all means to appease the wrath of an angry God, which we have shamefully provoked, it is then very unseasonable to seek after great things for our selves.

9. Have we been faithful stewards of that portion, which the Lord in his providence hath afforded us?

10. Have we relieved a disciple in the name of a disciple? Have we administered to the *necessity* of the *Saints*? Have we supplied our distressed brethren in their exigents?

11. Have we fed the hungry, clothed the naked? And have our bowels earned with compassion towards them in their extremities?

12. And if our souls, upon private conference, can tell us that we have done this; Have we done it to a right end? Not for ostentation or popular applause, nor at the over-instance of Friends,  
nor



nor importunity of Allies, but in obedience to Gods command, and that his Name may have the Glory?

13. Have we upon this account been ready and willing to defray and lay out a great part of our substance for the purposes aforementioned, and for the advancement of piety, without repining and reluctance?

14. Have we not been filled with an over-high expectation of content, that we imagined might flow from creature-comforts?

15. And have not our thoughts been taken up and possessed with more than is really to be found in them?

16. Have we considered the many inconveniences that must inevitably attend all worldly enjoyments, though they present themselves never so pleasant and amiable to the eye of a facile apprehension?

17. Though as to our own particular, Providence may seem to have shared out a lesse pittance, then we think proportionable to the meanes we have used and the prayers we have put up for that purpose; have we considered that God in his wisdom hath abundantly made it up to other members of the Mystical body, that have



have possibly suffered *want* in an *higher* degree, and have therefore stood in greater need then our selves?

18. Have we considered, that those for *whom* God hath appointed an incorruptible inheritance *that fades* not away, in that *Celestial Tabernacle* not made with hands, the *Heaven of heavens*, have for the *most* part the meanest portion of outward things, and the least of worldly comfort in their enjoyment?

19. Have we considered that afflictions and troubles of the world, are in some degree the inseparable companions of the choicest Christians? ( Divine Writ imports no losse : *Tbrough many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdome of Rest.* )

20. Have we duely considered upon what a *slippery* place & dangerous precipice all those stand, that are incompassed about with *such a confluence* of earthly endearments, and become such slaves to their pleasures, that they have scarce liberty to entertain a thought either of Heaven or Hell, Death or Judgement, God or Christ, unlessse

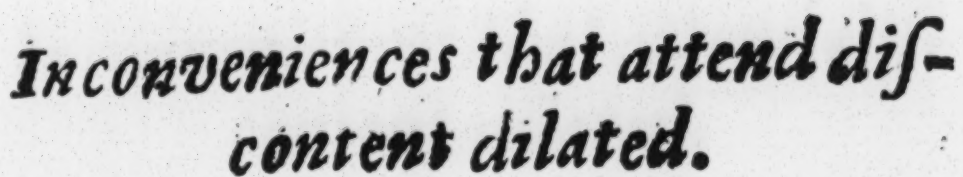


unlesse guided by an extraordinary principle of Grace?

Now as we tender the good of our own souls and hope for comfort, it behoves us to enter into a *serious* and *impartial* examination with our selves, and a *due consideration* of each particular *Quere*, and labour faithfully to know how much they concern us; and by how much we find our selves conscious, as to a failing in that wherein by *duty* we were engaged the contrary, by so much we may humbly conclude that Divine pleasure hath for a time given us over to a condition of trouble and discontent.

*Object.* But you may be apt to say, that all this avails little to our help, and that it is a very harsh, if not, a preposterous way of cure to rip open causes after this manner.

*Ans.* I answer, that all causes are not easily, but with much difficulty removed, unlesse well known. I have therefore taken liberty to insist a little upon this course, wherein I have desired to involve my self, as well as others, not despairing of some advantage by it.



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self's voice, the sorrow of the world  
 worketh death ; so that either of  
 which, though they encounter us sin-  
 gle, come not without their mis-  
 chiefs, and therefore of more dan-  
 ger, when their forces are united  
 in a confederacy or combination.  
 As first a discontented person be-  
 comes altogether indisposed to ev-  
 ry duty that refers to his spiritual  
 or temporal condition ; for so long  
 as he macerates himself through his  
 own distemper, the preaching of the  
*Word*, the performance of Prayer, or  
 the administration of any *Divine Or-*  
*dinance* to him, is little available.  
 A *Lecture* to a distracted ( I had al-  
 most said to a dead ) man is atten-  
 ded with as much efficacy : For  
 through a vexatious sorrow of heart  
 the spirit is broken ( saies the wis-  
 man ) and so long as that continues  
 ( as it were ) disjointed, and in piece,  
 it's altogether improbable that  
 should receive an impression of god  
 and bring forth fruit proportion-  
 ably. Now herein, I would not be  
 mistaken, for it is not a Godly pen-  
 tent

|| Prov.

15. 13.



tential sorrow that I speak of, but  
 a petulant vexatious trouble, that  
 brings such a discomposure, and bar-  
 renness with it in respect of Good;  
 For by the first (it must be confessed)  
 that the spirit becomes more malle-  
 able, and of a more Divine and affa-  
 ble Temper, whereby the seed of the  
 Word may take deeper root, and pro-  
 duce fruits answerably: In this case  
 though the spirit may seem to be  
 broken, yet no otherwise, then the  
 superficies of the earth is, when the  
 Husband-man intends to cast in  
 grain; And as that by the influence  
 of seasonable distilling showers is a-  
 gain compacted and consolidated,  
 without any prejudice to the crop;  
 so a Christians spirit (when softened  
 with a pious sorrow) through the  
 sunshine of divine dispensations, be-  
 comes more firmly cemented, and  
 more fruitful then ever, being then  
 in a better capacity to conform and  
 yield obedience to the Apostles rule,  
 in \* adding to Faith, virtue; and to  
 virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge,  
 Temperance; and to Temperance, Pati-  
 ence

\* 2 Pet. I.  
 5, 6, 7, 8.



ence ; and to patience, Godlinesse ; and to Godlinesse, brotherly Kindnesse ; and to brotherly Kindnesse, Charity ; and those in whom these things are and abound shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ (as the Apostle observes.)

Thus, having cleared my sense in this particular I shall wade further towards the discovery of those inconveniences that attend discontent : And as I said before, it workes an indisposition to Good, so it also layes Men open and leaves them lyable to much evil ; it's deplorable to think how many through the violence of that passion, have wilfully contracted the spanne of their life, by an untimely death, and made themselves more miserable by their distemper, then the Almighty had done by crosses : Alas ! how apt is that destroying enemy of Mankind ( Satan ) ( who watcheth every occasion, and attends every opportunity to advance his kingdome of darkness to seize upon a discontented spirit, as being then most likely

work its overthrow, either by aggravation of its misery, or some other insinuating suggestions? And on the other hand, How do those insnaring subtilties, and deceitful allurements of the world, make it their advantage to encounter a spirit in distraction, as then supposing it to have cast off the protection of the meek spirit of patience ( the best armour against such assaults ? ) Nor will a third dangerous enemy ( the flesh ) be idle at such a time, but fly out into rebellion and leavy war against the Law of the mind, and so subject it to the law of sinne ; Thus we see what a conspiracy of evil Instruments there is to destroy poor souls, that are involved in this maulady : Oh ! then what a madnesse is it for contemptible clay to contend with the Potter that can fashion and mould it as he pleaseth ! Oh ! What a senceles thing is it, for a man to torment himself and harraze his own *soul* with the vexatious thoughts of those evils, that are beyond all remedy ! He that spurnnes against



pikes of Iron, can in reason expect to  
 gain nothing but wounds: He that  
 willingly runs against a rock, not  
 only dashes the vessel in pieces, but  
 loses all the fraught: for he that  
 entertaines or gives way to discon-  
 tent, not only torments the body,  
 but also casts the soules welfare into  
 extremity of hazard. What will  
 not a man do in the midst of this  
 passion? He'll create quarrels with  
 men, and sometimes with those of  
 neereft Relation to him, without any  
 colour of cause, and so both betray  
 his folly, and run himself into a  
 guilt of grosse enormities: And  
 which is more sad, he'll not stick to  
 quarrel and contend with God him-  
 self, if any thing be presented con-  
 trary to his liking, or offer to thwart  
 his humour.

What an hanious crime was it in  
 that discontented Prophet, so  
 vainly and furiously to contest with  
 his Maker, about such a trivial thing,  
 as a withered Gourd? And it could  
 not but afflict good *Jacob*, (more  
 then the sterility of his wife)



to hear her queratously cry out || Give || Gen. 30.  
*me children or else I die*; as though I.

Providence were confined either to grant her desire or accomplish her ruine; The latter is often true, if the first be inordinately sought after or unseasonably sued for: and this is very observeable, that those who are excessively given up to the bent of their own wills, (When they see it disproportionable to the Will of the most High) do not only meet with grievous Troubles from within themselves, but for the most part, heavy Judgements from God: and thus it was with the murmuring and repining *Israelites*, who because they had not every *thing* they desired, esteemed slightly of what they had; and because they were not exactly humoured, became wilfully ingrateful and therefore were justly pursued with multiplied judgements.

What a detestable humour was that in *Abab*, who within the confines of all *Israel* could not find matter enough to feed his hungry desire, nor satisfy his discontented cra-



ving mind, unlesse he might enjoy *Naboths* poor *Vineyard*? What an high contempt of the Almighty Munificence and bounty was this; that he could not content himselfe with a Kingdome, but labour with so much vehemency to gratifie his corrupt pleasure with such an inconsiderable trifle?

And to proceed yet further, discontent is the mother of disorder; it devides and subdevides not onely the senses but the faculties, and sets them at an irreconcilable distance and enmity one with another, and through this fewd and opposition they debilitate and weaken each other, whereby that naturall and inherent life and vigour, whence there should proceed lively and perfect issues, (being thus decayed) produceth little but obliquities, and effects of decrepit nature.

Moreover he that is perplext in mind, seldome acts any thing that either pleaseth himself or another, those actions and carriages that relate to his own particular, are for

the most part looked upon with an  
 evil eye , as carrying along with  
 them direful troubles, doubts and  
 disquieting Molestations: and so  
 being discomposed and out of frame,  
 it cannot be expected, that those a-  
 ctings which refer to others, should  
 be any waies proportioned to their  
 desires, or suited to their pleasures:  
 But alas ! this is not the worst, ( al-  
 though bad enough to be opposed  
 both to ones own and others ad-  
 vantage ) for he that discontentedly  
 troubles himself for outward things  
 ( either in respect of their miscarry-  
 age, for that they have not directly  
 occurred to his humour and given  
 full answer to his expectation; or  
 in regard of the deprivation of those  
 enjoyments, on which his heart hath  
 been set, but now irrecoverably lost )  
 runs in a *Dyametricall opposition* to the  
 rule of Gods word manifested in sacred  
 writ ( which ought to be the guide  
 of every mans life and actions ) and  
 thereby extremely displeaeth and ir-  
 ritates the Majesty of the most High,  
 then which nothing in the world is  
 of



of a more lamentable consequence.

Thus (Sir) I have in some degree endeavoured to make a true discovery of those miseries and inconveniences that accompany *discontent*, and have accordingly given an *account*, of some of those many dangers, wherein a troubled and dissatisfied person is involved: And although you may meet with a more ample and compleat discovery (in relation to this particular) then this of mine, as proceeding from those of larger experience and riper judgement; yet as an exact proportionist will portray the whole stature of *Hercules* by the print of his foot, so may you by that skantling I have here given, and that little I have said, guesse, what may be farther offered to this purpose.

Object. But perhaps you'll say, I stand at a great distance from the cure, and that instead of applying comfortable cordials I have used cutting and corroding Corrasives, which only tend to the aggravation of affliction, and not to the extenuation of grief; And that I have inverted  
that



that order, which compassion engages me to proceed in, in maladies of this nature ; and deal like an hard-hearted Chirurgian, that extends his probe to a painful search, by ripping the wound, and terrifying his Patient with the danger thereof, before he powre in one drop of balsome, or apply one healing medicine.

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* To all which I say ; that although I have been a little strict in the inquiry after the causes, and laying down the effects of this distemper, yet I hope, my method and manner herein, hath been no other, then what may very well consist with our comfort and satisfaction ; Though for the present, it may seem something harsh and disconsolate (especially to such, as have had experience of, and acquaintance with tryals and dispensations of this nature :) Yet neverthelesse I doubt not (through Divine Assistance ) to prescribe and offer, some such effectual meanes, as may very probably tend to over-rule the distemper, drive away the disease, and consequently estate us in a condition of content.





## I. PARAGRAPH:

*Twenty particulars pointed at  
insisted on.*

**A**Nd in my apprehension there  
not any thing more considerat  
or more effectually conducible ther  
unto then to possesse our hearts w  
a consideration of the Instabilitie  
variablenesse of all things. here  
low ; For without doubt, if  
were seriously and impartial  
weighed , the transitory trifles  
this life, would fall farre sho  
of that high valuation, which m  
men unadvisedly put upon them  
these daies ; Nor can any thing  
reason be alleadged for such  
esteem, if we do but duly consider, th  
there was never yet any one in  
world, that upon infallible grou  
could promise and assure himself  
the enjoyment of any sublim  
felicie

felicity, for the continuance of one day, which is but a small time compared with a mans life, and the longest tract of ones life, is but as a span in respect of eternity: For first either the wise disposer may suddenly take them away from us, or us from them; If we look upon our selves in the largest dimension and highest capacity over the creatures, we shall find that we are but stewards, and stewards must either quit, or account for their imployment when their masters please.

All earthly things we do enjoy, are but ours upon condition; and how prone and ready the best of *men* are, to faile, on their parts, I leave to every experient and rational man to judge; I might dilate this into several particulars, and discover by how many waies and meanes, we may be deprived of outward enjoyments, and by what devises they may be snatcht from us: but that amongst other things I shall transfer to our own thoughts, in regard it would swell this discourse beyond  
its



its intended limit, and render it  
 ther a volume, then Epistle : there-  
 fore next let's consider how soon  
 we may be taken from the world  
 who can assure himself of a *moment*  
*time*? Though he be indued with  
 never so much wisdom, strenght-  
 ned with never so much power, and  
 compassed about with all the huma-  
 helps and advantages that can come  
 within the circuit of his *imagination*  
 yet as the Psalmist saies, *his soul is con-*  
*tinually in His hands*, nor does he know  
 but that it may expire in his next breath.  
 Alas! The life of man is but like  
 bubble, and how soon that vanishes  
 away (even before we can well ap-  
 prehend it) experience tell us: or like  
 the drop of a bucket, or the dust of  
 a ballance that's shaken off and be-  
 ried from our view, by the least mo-  
 tion: or like *Jonas* his gourd that  
 was faire and flourishing over night  
 but withered and dead the next  
 morning.

How many have rettyred to their  
 evening habitations with intent to  
 take their healthful repose: and  
 in



in order thereunto, have shut their eyes in a natural sleep, but never waked, except in another World? Hence we may gather how *fragile* and *brittle* a thing mans life is, even like a glasse that by how much the finer it is, by so much it is the easier broken: or like a twined thred, which how soon it's cut a sunder, all men know; Therefore it argues a great measure of weakness and inconsideratnesse in us, if we look not upon each day, as if it were the last, that's allowed to our *Pilgrimage*: why should we esteem our selves in a better condition then good *St. Paul* Who \* protested by that rejoicing he had \* in *Christ Jesus* to dy dayly? What a miserable poor complaint was that of one of the *Roman Emperours*, (*Titus Vespasian* that great conquerour of the *Jewes*) who being seized on by sicknesse, and conveyed in a litter, lookes forth, and with much indignation quarrels with and accuses heaven for that he must die, and had not deserved it? When alas! silly *Mortall*, if he had but considered he  
was

I Cor.  
15. 31.



was a man, it had been guilt enough  
 and for which nature might justly  
 pronounce her sentence of death  
 against him: But he had been so pu-  
 up with the honour and success of  
 his high *Achievements*, that he could  
 not entertain any thoughts  
 parting with this, and embracing  
 a better life: and I heartily wish, that  
 the crime did not cry aloud in our ears  
 and that mens minds were less taken  
 up, and their thoughts less im-  
 ployed about secular affaires, and  
 the fading trifles of this world, and  
 more intent on those spiritual  
 things, that might advance a mans  
 glorious Kingdome, wherein their  
 souls might be happied with an eter-  
 nal welfare.

I am perswaded that the defect  
 on of most men in this particular  
 arises through the want of due con-  
 sideration of the vanity of earthly  
 things.

What considerate man would  
 doate upon that goblin honor, which  
 cannot be fitter compared then to a  
 meer shadow, which upon the  
 enterpos

interposure of a cloud is quite gone, without so much as leaving the least mention where it was? To this purpose observe the words of a learned Author: *The same Sun (saies he) sees Haman adored in the Persian Court like some Earthly Deity, and like some base vermine waving upon a Gibbet: Do we see the great and glorious Cleopatra shining in the pompous Majesty of Egypt? Stay but a while, and you shall see her in the dust, and her two children whom she proudly stiled the sun & the moon, driven like miserable Captives before the chariot of their Conquerour.*

\* Man being in honour abides \* Psal. 49.  
not (saith the Psalmist) he perisheth, 12.  
but his greatnesse (as more frail then he) is oftentimes dead and buried before him, and leaves him the surviving executor of his own shame: Much more of vanity might be discovered in this trifling shadow (Honour.)

Another thing which surprises the eye of the world, is Beauty, and that, if rightly considered, is but a fading flower which the revolution

C

of



of one daies time, beholds both its glory and ruine, its birth and burial.

It's no other then a light touch of natures tincture cast upon the skinne, and how suddenly that's wiped off with a little sicknesse or other casualty, experience tells us: He that had the choise of many thousand faces, ( as well as a plenitude of all other enjoyments ) could say towards the period of his Proverbs, \* that *favour is deceitful, and beauty is*

\*Prov. 31. *vanity*; whereof wee may be very  
30. credulous, since we know not a more valid authority, then this of the wise-mans, that will maintain the contrary.

Nor does Strength and Vigour of bodie ( which is more chiefly appropriated to our own sex ) carry with it a lesse proportion of frailty, then the former: for though we could sustaine and hold it up to its ultimate term, till hoary old age seize upon us; Alas! that's but a short time; it greets us before we be aware, often letting us know, by its decaying effects, that it hath us by



by the hand ; it shrivels our flesh that before was *brawney* ; weakens our sinues, that lately were *strong*, and cripples our joints that were nimble and active, and steales away ( though almost by insensible degrees ) that natural heat and vigorous warmth, whereby every part became enlivened and comfortably refreshed. But it may be observed, that many times, either solitary sicknesse or some wasting malady, prevents the decayings and debilitations of age, and so subjects the stoutest man to a low condition, and pulls the strongest upon his knees, causing him to confesse with the holy Preacher, that \* *youth as well as childhood is vanity.* \* Eccles. 11. 10. Another thing which seizes many, and hurries them headlong to their own ruine ( unless well grounded upon pious principles ) is an Excesse of worldly Pleasures, which may not improperly be called vanity in the abstract, a meer extempory flash, far more imaginary, then real, which for the most part dies in the birth : But admit them permanent ; yet the consideration

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of those direful effects they produce, administers matter enough for a loathing & detestation of them, & ground enough to deterre every conscientious Christian from an eager pursuit after them, or delight in them.

One would tremble to think what dangerous incendiaries they are to lust; and that so emasculates all the powers of the soul, that its noblest operations become brutish : It begets a wanton eye, a lascivious ear, obscene talk, unclean and filthy jests; besides many other secret abominations, not to be conceived without horror, much lesse to be mentioned.

Therefore if we look upon sensual pleasures, as they are in themselves vain and transitory; or in their vile consequences base and impious, they deserve not to have harbour in a sober mind : but rather to be ejected, and utterly banished from our thoughts, as contemptible, and unworthy of our notice.

Thus I have plainly laid down the vanity and short continuance of these

these last mentioned earthly felicities; and we may be satisfied, that all other temporal enjoyments are subject to the same fate and mortality. What can we fix our eyes upon, that does not admonish us of our frailty? Do not all our fellow-creatures dy for us or by us? The brightsome cheerful *day*, dissolves into dark and melancholy night: The fruit-bearing-trees, and other pleasant plants of the earth, suffer an Autumnal nakedness: The beautiful face of that common mother of us all, doth once in each twelve months time resemble death. Oh! what a stupendious height of *madness* is it in any worthless miserable mortal, to think he can extract a continuance of happiness out of an inch of time! That Chymistry or sacred art is onely proper to him, to whom all things are possible: That Almighty power can draw forth the vast spaces of eternity out of a moment of time; can contract the swelling Ocean into the compass of a nut-shell, and the capacious Earth



into a grain of sand, and is able to accomplish those things, which are tenne thousand degrees beyond the reach of all *humane* capacity and imagination.

Do we then upon serious consideration manifestly discern the fading transitorinesse of accumulated Riches, of adored Honour, of shining Beauty, of *vigorous* Strength, of delightful Pleasures; yea and of Life it self, and whatever else can be esteemed as dear and precious to us in this world; and can we (upon second thoughts) so fix our hearts on them, and doat after them, as to be troubled and dejected with our parting from them? Sure it betraies a great measure of folly in any one, to bewaile and afflict himself for the losse of that which he knowes must certainly decay and vanish: yet such is the nature and condition of *earthly-minded-men*, whose wills are so vitiated, affections misguided, and understandings dark'ned, that they cannot see further. But wise Christians will value good things accord-



ing to their continuance, and therefore let their hearts upon those unspeakable, and invisable comforts of a better *life*; as knowing (or at least truly believing) that the *things* which are not seen, are both happy and eternal.

Therefore let's be perswaded, as a counter-balance to the Creatures vanity (having already seen how fraile and transitory all outward and earthly enjoyments are, though their enticements be never so many, and seem to hold forth promises of a faire and pleasing *nature*) steadfastly so fix our soules on those things which are of a more *Celestiall* concernment, those inestimable Riches that are treasured up in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can ever possibly corrupt, nor thieves breake through and steale, which are beyond all thoughts of diminution or decay. Oh that we could satisfy our selves with an holy and humble contemplation of those unspeakable and unparallell'd joies, wherewith the glorified Saints and Angels are



perpetually happied, and whereof there is a plentiful portion reserved and appointed (through the bountiful providence of the most High) for every true pious believer! If we do but cast our souls upon that immoveable rock (*Christ Jesus*) and lay hold on him by a stedfast faith, we may be confident, there shall not be one mercy, that respects our eternal happinesse, withheld from us, as is very clear and evident by *sacred Scripture-authority*. What person then, that hath but a sparke of grace, can afflict and macerate himself, for the want and deprivation of those creature-comforts, which are doom'd to a fading mortality, when he may upon such soul-solacing, and saving tearmes become undoubted heire of all those glorious promises, that are recorded in *Holy Writ*, (in and through the merits of *Christ*) and have as great a share in that heavenly inheritance, as the *highest Angel* hath? I say, then who would trouble himself about the trifles of this world?



## 2. P A R A G R A P H.

**F**Or although there be a confluence and continuance of all earthly endearments ; yet they fall infinitely short of satisfaction ; which is another particular I shall crave leave to insist on ; not doubting to offer something that may not onely appear, but prove considerable. As first , suppose that Life it self ( without which all earthly things amount to nothing ) were protracted to the utmost length of *Methusala* his age ; and then withall consider that original guilt and corruption, which is derived from the loines of our first *Parents*, whereby our whole man became depraved, and lost, ( in respect of our first state of innocency ) and alas ! we shall find very small satisfaction in this length of daies : we should be either much unsatisfied , and out of order : we should grow insufferably



insufferably weary of our selves, and of the world, making it our daily suit to be dissolved, and so exiled from this unpleasing *Pilgrimage*.

If we cast our eyes on those, whose age *Providence* hath drawn forth but to seventy or eighty years, for the most part we see them miserably cumbered and incumbred, crying and calling out for death, to release them from that burden. And certainly, if their lives should run forth into a larger term, it would be attended with a greater measure of toilsomeness and trouble.

Then again, admit that to length of daies there were added, a fulness of earthly blessings, and those freed from many perplexities and grievances, wherewith they are commonly accompanied; yet very little satisfaction could the soul receive from them, or find in them: For without doubt if any thing of true contentment and of a comfortable durance could have been found in them, Great and wise *Solomon*, that had the full command and enjoyment

ment of them all, upon the fairest conditions that the earth could allow, would have afforded them a more favourable Character, then *vanity of vanities*: and why we should expect more from them, that have them upon far meaner termes, then that wise *Monarch* had, is to me no lesse then a *Paradox*? Nor can I rationally apprehend, why any should promise to himself a felicity in those things, which daily and hourly experience renders not only dissatisfactory but miserable. If we look upon the rich and covetous person (for indeed they are seldome separable) who, though he hath heaped up worldly wealth, to a seeming inexhaustible store, and as much as would probably satisfy many moderate-minded-men; yet we shall hear him expresse a want of something, still vehemently craving, and inordinately desiring more: Though his substance be never so vast, it's too poor and narrow for his avaritious mind: The eye and the ear (those *twins* and *parveyors* for the *flesh*) still remain

un-



unsatisfyed , and thereupon the heart saies, it's not enough : the more it hath, the more it craves, discontentedly afflicting it self, when it cannot attain to the utmost extent, of its boundlesse and unlimited desire. Nor is the proud and ambitious man lesse perplext when he cannot reach to the height of that honour, which his lofty spirit looks at : His aspiring thoughts will prompt him to leave no waies or meanes unassayed (though never so dangerous and *unwarrantable*) whereby he may possibly accomplish that, which his thirsty mind aimes at ; as we may plainly see in *Hamans* case. If in the next place we observe the Voluptuous person, who bathes himself in pleasures, and swims through times swift current, with as much vain mirth and jollity, as a created capacity can suggest ; yet all this suffices not , so light and airie are all delights of this nature, that they passe away like a shadow, and are many times gone in the very moment of their enjoying ; In so much that

that for the most part those men which are voluptuously given, are forced to feed their humours upon a stock of past pleasures, suffering their thoughts to run over with a kind of pleasing liberty (though indeed a most sinful licentiousnesse) the former passages of their vitious and voluptuous lives. And all this (if rightly considered) is so farre from administering true content, that it aggravates their misery, by contracting a double depravity and guilt upon their own souls, which will one day reflect upon their miscarriages with sorrow and sadnesse, and bitterly condemne their own folly for giving way to such irreligious and horrible courses.

Further if we look upon the Strong and Valiant man, we shall see how fraile and unsatisfying that is (as I have before more fully declared) and how soon the most active and vigorous strength becomes weakness, either through the decaying of age, sickness, or other accidents. Sampson (so famous in Holy Writ) that



that had as much cause to boast  
 himself in that particular as ever  
 any, having thereby done such unpa-  
 rallell'd things, as almost exceeded  
 belief; yet how suddenly he was  
 bereft of all that power and strength  
 \*Judg 16. 17. ( \* after he had discovered the cause  
 thereof to his *Dalilah* ) is notoriou-  
 ly known. I might runne into a  
 multitude of Instances, of the crea-  
 tures dissatisfaction, were it not ra-  
 ther to protract time, then afford  
 content. Therefore in a word. thus  
 That if all the pleasures and profits  
 earthly concernments and enjoy-  
 ments of ten thousand worlds were  
 heaped together, and became a mo-  
 nopoly; There is not so much effi-  
 cacy to be found in all as would sa-  
 tiate the desires of one *Immortal* soul;  
 and the reason is this; for that they  
 are of a fraile and finite nature; and  
 the soul purely infinite; they are  
 material, but the soul immaterial;  
 they are of a drossy substance, but  
 the soul made up of heavenly facul-  
 ties; so that there can be no more  
 true fellowship betwixt them then  
 there

there is betwixt light and darknesse,  
which stand at an irreconcilable  
distance.

Therefore since it appears that the  
choicest of all outward endearments  
are so little satisfying, ( or rather so  
much dissatisfactory ) It may induce  
us to give them a proportionable  
value and no more, and to fix our  
hearts and affections on those higher  
things that are of a more durable sub-  
stance; which we may be certain will  
not perturb our spirits, nor subject  
us to this destroying distemper of  
discontent.



### 3. P A R A G R A P H.

**A**Nd because there may be some  
in the world that are more apt  
to be deterred from what they en-  
cline to, by an apprehension of  
danger than any other consideration;  
I shall therefore now shew, how pe-  
rillous it is, to overprize earthly  
comforts



comforts; and that will appear  
 in regard it affronts the majesty  
 the most High : for we lessen the  
 esteem, which we ought to enter-  
 tain of the Almighty , when we  
 overvalue those things which are  
 subordinate : then consequently  
 this error must be acknowl-  
 edged to be exceeding dan-  
 gerous : Oh ! How can that God  
 endure, ( whose bounty freely di-  
 penseth it self to the relief of  
 those that have interest and affiance  
 in him ) to see his creatures value  
 above himself ! It will vex a natu-  
 ral man to see his favours feasted on  
 and his person contemned, to be  
 beaten with his own weapon ; How  
 may it much more provoke the fier-  
 anger of the *Omnipotent God* to break  
 forth and consume those that create  
 to themselves an heaven on Earth  
 who though they live and subsist only  
 on mercy, yet undervalue the *Great  
 Giver* and *Author* of it : For this  
 undeniable that where the creature  
 is overvalued the Creator is unde-  
 valued ; and ( to speak it with rever-  
 ence



rence ) we do then as much as in us  
 lies to degrade the *Deity*, and debase  
 the Majesty of our heavenly Father :  
 we ought to be very circumspect in  
 this particular, and armed with a-  
 bundance of caution, against the  
 insinuations and attempts of our  
 subtile and deceitful enemies who ly  
 in waite, and are ever ready to  
 prompt us to enormities of this na-  
 ture. Satan seeks all advantages to  
 withdraw our affections from God,  
 and to that end presents us with the  
 world laid forth in all its variety,  
 and in its most amiable dresse, and  
 if that take us, he hath gained great  
 part of his designe; for by the next  
 degree he thinks to make us his own:  
 And then the World, though a seem-  
 ing friend, becomes a reall enemy,  
 and contributes to Satans Design,  
 and like a cheating Gamester suffers  
 us to win at first, that at last he may  
 go away with all: He courts us with  
 smiling flateries and pleasing pre-  
 tences, untill he hath engaged us;  
 and then he makes us vassals.

Nor are our corruptions idle, but  
 D ready



\*J

ready to entertain the worlds  
braces, and like Tinder fly in  
flame upon the first touch. In  
regard we ought to be very care  
how and upon what termes we  
verse with the world, that we  
not be involved in danger.  
fulnesse of the earth is made  
many ingredients, and thought  
are for the *most part* of a gross nature  
and therefore lesse taking; yet  
are mixt with some that have  
ring baits, and so attract our affe  
ons; when alas, in the end they  
into *emptines* and can never sat  
the better part of man (the so  
but many times hazard the loss  
that most precious Jewel, that  
so dearly purchased with an In  
mable Price, (the Innocent blood  
of the Lord *Jesus*) to recover which  
the powers on earth cannot lend  
least assistance.

And that which yet brings  
danger, the fulnesse of the world  
tainted with poison, with sinne  
the curse of God. And what pre  
sure can any man take to drink

that cup that's mixt with poison,  
 though it be never so sweet and deli-  
 cious to the taste? Besides it's a most  
 defiling substance; for whatsoever  
 the heart converses with that's worse  
 then it self, it receives pollution  
 thence and so becomes corrupted.  
 And though we have never so great a  
 share of this fulnesse, it falls below  
 our expectation, sinck it as lowe as  
 we can. And that which is yet more  
 dangerous; It costs us many thou-  
 sand times more then it is worth:  
 our precious time, which was alot-  
 ted us for a better improvement; our  
 ear and daily thoughts that were  
 given us to feed on higher things,  
 and often takes up our *Immortal* souls  
 which should not fix on finite *objects*:  
 that here's a large stock laid out  
 for it: abundance of care to get it;  
 extremity of fear to keep it; and  
 many times exceeding much grief to  
 lose it. And being obtained and  
 held with all this difficulty, it  
 may make us *miserable*, but deever tru-  
 ly make us happy. Oh! Then,  
 what man alive (unlesse he be given



over to act his own ruin ) that he  
 a God to serve, and a soul to save  
 an heaven to hope for, and an  
 to fear; sins to avoid, and Grace  
 to acquire; will imploy his time  
 his thoughts, his interest to become  
 the world's *Favourite*, when the  
 fruition of earthly things in the  
 highest felicity appears so dang-  
 erous? Let's rather be willing to part  
 with all that's dear and delightful  
 to us in this life, then run so great  
 an hazard as the displeasure of God  
 and the losse of our own souls. Let  
 be ready upon every occasion to  
 off these incumbrances, that improve  
 our progresse in our spiritual course  
 and chearfully embrace those helps  
 and advantages that may direct  
 further us in our way to heaven-  
 ward, where we shall enjoy honour  
 without envy; solace without  
 sorrow; felicity without frailty;  
 comfort without end.



#### 4. PARAGRAPH.

**H**AVING laid down the danger that involves all those whose hearts are let forth to an over-high *valuing* of creature-comforts: I shall next examine, what a perplexity and distemper is usually wrought both in the bodies and souls of those that have over-full estates: and also what a torment it is to them, when they are forced to part with them, or otherwise suffer a declension in their honour and greatnesse, (especially if they be such as are meerly *morall*.) Experience tells us, that excess is attended with sickness, and superfluity produces a world of diseases, neither of which are ordinarily attained to without over-plentifull estates. Observe that man whose curious and craving palate is such, that he cannot endure to satisfy himself with some dishes that are choice,



but will extend his command to  
 superfluous variety of them, and  
 after he hath fed so long as nature  
 will admit him, many times quarrel  
 with himself, because his stomach  
 will not receive another course of  
 choicer morsels, but becomes glutted  
 upon the very sight of them: so that  
 hence proceed surfeits, feavourish  
 distempers, and abundance of other  
 maladies that cry out for the *Physician*  
*an*; who shall now be in more request  
 than the *Cook*, and a *second* sickness  
 must endeavour to cure the *first*. The  
 health which is one of the greatest  
 of sublunary mercies, must be wan-  
 tonly destroyed, or at least be  
 impaired, as will render such a per-  
 son in a decaying sickly condition  
 so long as his life lasts: When on  
 the contrary he to whom providence  
 hath allowed a small portion in this  
 world, eats and drinks proportion-  
 ably, and so lives at a comfortable  
 distance from such distempers.

Besides, so great are the troubles that  
 for the most part waite on a full  
 estate, that one thinks a due consider-  
 ration



ration of them, might enduce us to rest satisfied with a little. First, Envy is an unavoidable companion of Greatness, this body can never walk without that shadow, they are inseparable: when on the contrary it scarce ever looks at a mean Condition: low shrubs are seldome struck with lightning; It is the lofty proud Cedars that are most lyable to those devouring flames. David while he tended his fathers flocks lived merrily and without disturbance; but when he once approaches the Court (though by Sacred Election and Appointment) and becomes arrested with applause and greatness; then emulation and envy, despight and malice, pursue him close at the heels; and though he forsake the Court, and wander in the Wildernesse, thither these blood-bounds follow him: If he fly to the land of the Philistines, they'll find him out, and chase him to Ziklag: and though at last he arrive at his just Throne, and there hopes to breath a little after all these tedious Encounters, yet still he's accosted with unquietnesse,



and forced in a most *patheticall* and  
 Psa. 132. sensible manner to cry out \* Lord re-  
 I. member *David* and all his troubles. Thus  
 many are betrayed by their wealth;  
 and their very greatnesse creates a  
 Judge to condemne them as malefa-  
 ctors.

He that falls from an high preci-  
 pice, cannot probably avoid bruises;  
 but he that suffers a fall on even  
 ground, is lyable to little or no  
 harm. Is it not then much better to  
 be safe in a lowe condition then  
 mounted high and subject to so much  
 peril? And then further, greatness  
 can never continue without vexati-  
 ons and disquieting cares; that are  
 ever ready to perplex both bed and  
 board, to distract our sleep, disgust  
 our meat, embitter our pleasures,  
 and shorten our daies. Nor are the  
 holiest of men free or exempted  
 from these perturbations: By how  
 much the higher they are advanced  
 in outward things, so much the more  
 trouble and vexation they shall meet  
 with (either in respect of instruments  
 or otherwise) in the managery of  
 those



those affaires : For where earthly promotion is, distraction ( in some degree ) inseparably attends it. That made Gregory, ( none of the worst Bishops of Rome ) passionately complain of the clog of his high preferment, confessing though he was outwardly advanced, he was inwardly debased; and that the burthen of his honour did insufferably depresse him, and his innumerable cares disquiet him on all sides. It was observed by the Jewish Doctors, that Joseph the Patriarch, was of a shorter life then the rest of his brethren, And this reason they render of it, that his cares were so much the more and greater, as his place and employment was higher.

And further, sad experience tells us, that Honour is rarely upheld without sinne, and that grievous temptations follow great Estates. The \* holy Apostle Paul brands wealth \* 1 Tim. with deceitfulness; for that it cheates 6. 9, 10. many men of their soules, and so robbes them of those everlasting treasures, that are preserved from all corruption



corruption and decay, whereof they might have been made partakers, but not their hearts been *inordinately* on this thick *clay*, this *mammon* of the world.

And it is incredible to think, with what torment earthly men part with this trash. How many men have lost their lives, rather than they would lose their bagges; or at least run themselves into such extremity of danger to preserve them, that they have ever after lived miserably? But that which is yet more insufferably grievous and lamentable, is the great *Account* that will inevitably succeed these large entertainments, at the last and General day of Judgement, when every one shall be summoned to answer for what hath been done in the flesh, and how they have employed (or rather improved) those Talents they have been intrusted with. Oh! How terrible will it be then for those to appear before the Majesty of Heaven, that have made *Gold* their *God*? That in this life have doated upon a moment of time,



time, and so much sleighted the vast spaces of eternity ? Sure it must be very difficult, (if not impossible) for such to make a faire reckoning, in the failing whereof they become perpetually miserable. And that conscience that before seemed dead, will contribute to the soules affliction and sorrow, and bring fresh to mind those evils it hath formerly delighted in.

Now if these several particulars be summed up, as first, those tedious indispositions and distempers of body, occasioned through an Excesse : Then those extraordinary troubles and perplexities of mind raised by inordinate and sollicitous cares, for the support of greatnesse ; together with that *Mortall hatred* and *sinful emulation* incident to a full *Estate* ; besides the vexation in parting with, and torment in accounting for this *worldly pelfe* ; and that which is most dreadful, the hazard of losing our *Immortall* souls : certainly these considerations duely weighed, and seriously thought on, have sufficient  
force



force to deterre any sober minded Christian from running on to a delight of these drossy and perplexing vanities, these rotten earthly treasures. Therefore steadfastly eyeing these many *Inconveniencies*, we ought rather earnestly to pray, that we may be freed from the occasions of them, (which appears by what hath been said, to be outward pompe and secular greatnesse) then in the least measure to be afflicted for the want of them, when at best and in their highest capacity, they may perplex us, but never really content us.

*Object.* It may be objected, that it's a farre easier thing to say we may be happily contented, and satisfied in the want of these worldly advantages, then to be truly so indeed; and that the practise is farre more difficult then the profession.

*Ans.* I confesse it is so, and that all have not learned that Divine Art: they must be diligent disciples in the school of Christ before they can take forth this lesson, and become proficient: Neverthelesse if these particulars I have already insisted on, be well

well considered, as the unstable and momentany condition of all things here belowe, and how unsatisfying they are in their greatest confluence and abundance; together with that exceeding danger that arises by an over-high estimation of them; and also the many and great distempers and distractions that attend both body and soul, in the fruition of them and parting with them; and likewise the terrour in accounting for them. These with such circumstances and enlargements as our hearts will be ready to find out and suggest: will in some degree learne us how to want.



### 5. P A R A G R A P H.

But in regard all are not thus qualified, I will endeavour to shew the difference betwixt those that know how to dispence with the want of creature-comforts, and those



those that do not. The first sort, are principally such, as have learned to frame their mindes (with as much exactnesse as may be) to their estates. All satisfaction and contentment arises from this very conjunction of suitables; a convenient with a convenient: he that hath never so vast an estate, if his heart be not framed to it, cannot be satisfied. And on the other hand if his fortune be never so mean and poor; if his heart be suited to it, he's content, and enjoies himself with much felicity. That person knowes how to lack, that can speak with the same faithful

\* Psal. 23. heart in *Dauids* language, \* *The*

1. *Lord is my Shepherd, and therefore can I lack nothing.* And, that can also

\* Psal. 34. 9. willingly imbrace that saving exhortation of this good King, in another place, \* *O fear the Lord, ye that be*

*his Saints; for they that fear Him lack nothing.* It cannot be denied, that

many Servants of God enjoy but small portions in this world, and may be reduced from a greater to a lesse estate: but they conclude that

the



the wise providence of God finds it good for them; therefore they will humbly submit and submissively stoop to that Divine Hand, and subject themselves lowe at the feet of the Almighty, and with much patience endure what ever the Lord appoints them, and can with \* *Paul* \* *Act. 16.*  
*Silas*, rejoyce in their tribulation (if they be called to it. ) These know how to want, and nevertheless faithfully rely upon that God which gave them a being, and walk conscionably before him, trusting that he who is Lord of the whole earth, and the fulnesse thereof, will not permit their carefull and pious endeavours to go weeping away; but will in his own due and appointed time, (when most agreeable to his *Sacred Will* ) vouchsafe them a better being. O! What an happy estate have those arrived at, that can improve misery to such an advantage? That become richer by their want, and better by their *affliction*; & whose very infirmities afford them *strength*? This seems strange to flesh and blood,  
 and



and a carnal mind will be ready  
condemne it for an *heresy*; yet neve  
thelesse true with the children  
light, who are spiritually minded  
that are so much the purer, in  
gard they have passed under the be  
of the refiner, and know how  
blesse God, and content themselves  
in the lowest condition. And such  
doubtless have the greatest Interest  
that incorruptible inheritance, that  
is laid up in heaven.

Now on the contrary, such as are  
unskilled in this art, of knowing  
wel how to *want*; are first those who  
indigence is accompanied with  
\* distrust. And though there be many  
gracious promises that hold forth  
relief (or at least support) to those  
that are subjected to a mean condi  
tion; yet such is their diffidence  
\* that they cannot endure to waite the  
accomplishment. If they receive no  
supply in the very nick of time that  
they expect it, they begin to despa  
of ever obtaining any: so apt is a  
prayed man to measure the mercies  
and dispensations of the Almighty

by the crooked line of his own *sense*,  
and by this means irritates the Ma-  
jesty of the most High, rendring him-  
self not only miserable, but offen-  
sive.

There is a second sort whose po-  
verty is clogg'd with envy, they ab-  
horre to see any in a better *condition*  
then themselves; it many times  
troubles them more then their own  
want: such is the nature of this base  
passion, that it extends not onely to  
a hatred of others in respect of their  
outward enjoyments; but also, of  
the goodnesse that is in them. An  
envious person cannot endure to  
hold one that makes more con-  
fidence of his course of life, then  
himself; or that hath a faire repute  
amongst those that are good; or that  
endeavours to avoid those ways that  
are sinful and destructive: especially  
such a man prosper and flourish,  
when that raging *monster* observes no  
bounds; but runnes into all the in-  
ordinate *exorbitances* that may be, and  
quarrels with Divine Providence  
itself, till he work his own ruine.

E

There



There is a third sort whose is accompanied with Pride, though the very apprehension of that condition, should be a mean rather to humble them, then to set up their hearts to such a preposterous Excesse; yet notwithstanding they often become guilty in case, and suffer their lofty minds to roave beyond their estates.

- \* Rev. 3. of this number were the \*  
 17. *Laodiceans*, that esteemed themselves rich, encreased with goods, wanting nothing, when in truth they were no better, then wretched, miserable, poor, and blind, and naked. This proud conceit the \*  
 25. 2. Man inveighes against as an arrogant nation.

\* Psal

\* Psal

Moreover, there is another sort of people, whose want is attended with an abundance of impatience; by which means they do not only aggravate their own affliction; but (that is more lamentable) they provoke and stirre up the displeasure of God by a sinful murmuring and railing at his all-wise dealing. When

Instead of gaining reliefe to themselves, they add guilt to their misery which will one day prove a greater sorrow to the soul, then the want of outward accommodations can possibly be to the body.

What a passionate humour (and much to be lamented) was that of the Prophet *Jonah*; who being deprived of the protection of that gourd, which a few houres before had no more; could, in the face of that God which made both him and it, say, \* *\*Jon.4.9.*  
*Is it well to be angry, even to the death?*  
 These and many more, that I might instance in (should I further run into particulars) know not how to want, are so much the more miserable and so to be pittied) by how much lesse knowledge they have in this necessary Divine Art. Thus if we consider and compare the particulars insisted upon, both in respect of those that know how to want, and those that are ignorant thereof; we can easily discern the difference, and see the vast disproportion between them. The first are meek and



humble, the other are proud  
 impatient; the souls of the first  
 filled with love and confidence  
 Gods mercies, the other are envious  
 and diffident; the one observes  
 the dispensations of God with  
 spiritual eye, the other looks up  
 them with the eye of sense; so  
 there is as perfect antipathy as  
 twixt light and darknesse.

Therefore this should engage  
 through the assistance of Almighty  
 God (whose help will never be  
 denyed to those that humbly  
 faithfully implore it) to endeavour  
 by all meanes possible, so to be  
 and digest our wants, as that  
 may neither indispose us to his  
 sacred service; nor disturb our  
 soules, and thereby shut us out  
 all hopes of that holy contentment  
 which seasons and sweetens  
 condition to us.

\* Ps

\* Ps

\*\*\*\*\*

6. PARAGRAPH.

Certainly we cannot be careless and negligent in this, if we consider the *Celestiall* estate of those that live contentedly. If there be any happinesse under the Sunne it must be fixed here.

For first if we be freed from those anxieties and disturbances that all discontented persons are lyable to, we shall the better answer and manifest the end of our being, ( which is to serve our God in holynesse and truth ) we shall be invested with a greater capacity for that purpose. And that's a felicity, beyond which no mortal can attain to in this life: For he that is once settled in the service of his Maker, dreads not the worst of extremities, in respect of any permanent misery they can reduce him to: For so long as his conversation is above, what needs



he be afraid of any crosse accident here belowe, since all things worke together for the good of those that fear God? Whatever stormes arise he can anchor in a safe Harbour. Whatever adversaries he meet with, he is sufficiently armed against them; for the Lord is his *Shield and Buckler*, He's a present help in time of trouble: and if occasion be, hath a strong Tower, a Rock of Refuge, and a Castle of Defence to resort to, that will secure him in the greatest difficulty and danger.

Another Priviledge of those that live contentedly is, they comfortably enjoy themselves without worldly cares (although a man possesse the whole world) he's miserable. That is the enjoyment is this, when a man peaceably and quietly attendeth to the service of God, and his own conscience, without distraction, and comfortably apply himself to the vocation that providence hath appointed him in his *Pilgrimage*. What doth it availe this *Emperour* that *Monarch*, though their T

\* p

\* Pl



all Governments extend as farre as Land, and their commands reach the Seas, when they can never ad-dresse themselves to the managery of those weighty affairs, that fall within the compasse of their Empires and Kingdomes without vexations and distracting disturbances? Do they not meet with daily and hourly troubles? Sometimes they are threatned with *Invasions* from without, insurrections within, and discontentments on every side; which disturb their mindes in such an high degree, that their powers become grievous, and their Honours insufferably burthensome.

Furthermore, that which addes to the excellency of contentation; It is no where to be found, but with those that are truly Christians not nominally but really: who ever else pretendes to it, will find he hath but a small share, if he examine himself by a right rule. It's true, many *Men* may proceed far, and offer their to this particular: yet if they be brought to the Teste; It will be found



\* Phil. 4.  
11, 12.

they fall much below an holy contentation. St. Paul the Great Apostle of the Gentiles, could say after his conversion (not before) \* *I have learned in what state soever I am in, thereunto to be content: I know how to be abased and how to abound.* It was not the learned Gamaliel, at whose feet he had not that Divine skill; nor was his Heavenly Master that taught him this, and therefore he professeth it. And hence may we know not only how to attain it, but also how to value it. And by how much the more difficulty it is obtained, much the higher estimation we are engaged to set upon it; for if we once arrive at this haven, we have taken a degree in Heaven, and the goodnesse of our merciful Father know how to be happy both in want and abundance. What a rare and excellent advantage is this, when in the midst of troubles and combinations, how great, and of what nature soever they be, a Christian can comfortably acquiesce, and enjoy that

\* F

\* P

peace within, which the world is not worthy of, nor hath any acquaintance with.

Though a man be otherwise never so well accomplished, never so exquisitely learned ( which I must confesse is highly commendable: and could the face of humane learning be presented in its beauty, and made obvious to every eye; I am perswaded it would almost ravish every spectator; ) yet without this inward soul-satisfying peace, all outward acquirements, and naturall endowments would prove empty and dissatisfying. How nearly then it concerns us, as we tender our own satisfaction and comfort, as we regard the service of our Heavenly Father, to send up our earnest petitions to heaven, and to lay forth all our power and Interest for the purchasing this precious Jewel, which in the worst of times will be of singular advantage.





## 7. PARAGRAPH.

IT's true, to quiet our selves in the  
 contrariety of estates is difficult;  
 yet by the assistance of Gods holy  
 spirit, and the use of such Sacred  
 meanes as are appointed, it may be  
 attained to. That which most op-  
 poses us in this work, is our queri-  
 lous natures, that are hardly brought  
 to know what they would have; and  
 when they have it, are ignorant how  
 to approve of it. Many would be  
 happy; yet are extreemly unwilling  
 to part from their houses of clay:  
 they love not to think of their dis-  
 solution, (which is the beginning  
 of true happinisse, to those that have  
 made their calling and *election* sure.)  
 They desire to have their lives pro-  
 longed, and drawn out to a large  
 term, yet are loath to endure the  
 troubles, and the decaying incident  
 to old age. They expresse a willing-  
 nesse

nesse to be kept in order, and so to  
 be made meet for their masters use,  
 yet cannot well digest the chastise-  
 ments of affliction. And thus in  
 many instances of this kind, most  
 men suffer a distraction in the con-  
 trariety of estates and conditions,  
 and that in no small measure, so  
 long as perverse nature is predomi-  
 nant: But if once Grace, (that spiri-  
 tual habit of the soul) master and  
 overcome that (otherwise untamea-  
 ble) monster; (rebellious nature I  
 mean) from thenceforth it becomes  
 cowardly, unpowerful and dead, in  
 respect of any prejudice it can possi-  
 bly reduce us to. Let our condition  
 be what it will, we shall be enabled  
 to rest satisfied; which arrives us  
 at some degree of perfection. Ne-  
 verthelesse it must be acknowledged,  
 that middle estate, or Golden mean,  
 which the wise Monarch's thoughts  
 seemed to pitch on, (when he desired  
 \*neither poverty, nor riches; but that  
 he might be fed with the food of his  
 meet allowance,) is in all rationall  
 apprehension the best, and will most  
 pro-

\*Prov. 30.  
 8.



probably avoid those perturbing inconveniences that are incident to both extreames. For poverty, on the one hand, (especially if it meet with a man meerly natural) will deject him lower in his thoughts, then the very earth that bears him, and be apt to render him farre more despicable in his own esteem, then the want of substance makes him poor. Nor doth it rest here; but many times engageth him in a quarrell with his maker, and prompts him to fly in the face of heaven; because he is not master of a larger portion of earth: And to contemne the inexhaustible Treasures that are above, because he wants a little transitory trash here below; and thus at once continues not only poor but offensive.

So on the other *band*, he that's gladdened, in riches, and wallowes in wealth, and rather prey's then feeds on the fatnesse of the earth, discovers as much *unquietnes* in his estate, as those that have but a skantling (compared with his fulnes.) Besides his unlimited



mited and avaricious desire importunes for more, and with the horse-leech, still cries, *Give, Give*; seldom or never considering how he hath carried himself in his stewardship; nor regarding what pious improvement he ought to have made of so great a substance; nor minding that strict account that will one day be exacted, for the whole carriage of his life, and especially for the managing such a large possession. Alas! these things are too often exil'd from his thoughts, so that he grows imperious, and that carries him to a *contempt* of those below him; but in the end (to his misery) sets him at a greater distance from true happiness. Thus both extreames are hazardous, unless they meet with a gracious heart, that like a skilful Pilot, which way soever the wind blowes, can steer them to his advantage, and whensoever storms arise (though never so boisterous and terrible) can provide for his own safety. How necessary is it then for all that respect their own happiness,

by



by all industrious meanes to labour  
 and endeavour after this gracious  
 habit of the soul, that will render  
 every condition placable, and every  
 estate comfortable, without which  
 we may only wish, but never, upon  
 sure grounds, hope for content, a-  
 mongst those many crosse travell  
 and contrarieties of occasion that  
 the world presents us with ? The  
 wise Seaman, whose ship is tossed in  
 the angry Ocean with furious and  
 irresistible waves, will be ready to  
 feed the sea with his fraught (though  
 never so rich) by casting it overboard  
 if he may thereby secure his own life  
 and his friends : Much more ought  
 we, that are continually tossed in the  
 troubled sea of this world, to cast away  
 all carnal affections and worldly de-  
 sires, and willingly suffer a depri-  
 vation of earthly endearments to  
 preserve that main necessary, ( a gra-  
 cious heart ) which will prove of  
 far greater moment then all outward  
 Considerables.



## 8. PARAGRAPH.

**T**His great advantage an holy heart furnisheth us withall. It seriously considers that Divine Providence orders and over-rules all Events. Whatever is done in heaven or earth, is obedience to it: not so much as an hair from our heads falleth, whereof God is ignorant: no transaction whatsoever, respecting our spiritual or temporal estate; but falls under the cognizance of the Almighty. That all-wise God measures out to every creature such a due proportion: as he knowes will tend most essentially to his good: nor will he suffer any one child of his to want that, wherewith he should be truly bettered in the enjoyment of it. Alas! Of our selves we are most prone to make choise of those things that affect our sense, and appear amiable and delightful at first view,



view, though otherwise they may produce dangerous and destructive effects and consequences. What would become of us in this case if Almighty God did not direct us and like a merciful Father, with a kind of Gentle compulsion, ever force us to a reception and imbracment of those better things, that have regard to the glory of his name and our own Eternall Welfare? If our station were not set us, we should respect no bounds, observe no limits but wander in those waies that would destroy us.

\* There is no outward condition that can be universally good for all that which is healthful and nourishing meat for one, may prove a medicine to another. The Turk find food and Physick in that Opium, which would cast one of us into our last sleep: should the painful daily labourer, be confined to the Gentle mans dainty fare, it would either rauceate his stomach, or leave him to quarrel for stronger provision. What one loves another dislikes there



therefore providence furnisheth every one with that which is most fit for him ; although perhaps not alwaies to our apprehension . There is not a creature in the world but is provided for by the Almighty : but we are altogether unfit to be our own Carvers, for that we know no measure. It is the Lord that lookes down from heaven (saies the *Psalmist*) he beholds all the sons of men; From the place of His habitation, He lookes upon all the inhabitants of the earth ; and to those whom He hath given a being, makes such provision for, as is most agreeable to his wisdom and their condition, and will , out of the abundance of his love ( in his own appointed time ) give them such helps, as may tend to their better being. Certainly we must betray a world of infidelity, if we do not *believe* that *God infinitely wise* doth know what is best for us, who by his immense wisdom hath formed the earth, and by his understanding hath established the *heavens* ; whose knowledge the depths are

F broken



broken up, and the clouds drop  
 down dew. Nor is his mercy  
 infinite to will what he knowes  
 for us: He opens his hand (saith  
*David*) and satisfyes the desires  
 every living thing; but especiall  
 fulfils the desires of them that feare  
 him, and graciously preserves them  
 that love him. His power is also in-  
 finite to do what He wills: in whose right  
 hand is length of daies, and in his  
 left hand riches and honour. To  
 he that is steadfastly perswaded  
 that over-ruling power, and Super-  
 intendency, that Divine Providence  
 hath over all persons and occasions  
 cannot but be well satisfied, and  
 submit himself totally to the Lords  
 will; and in what condition soeuer  
 he be, with Christian wisdom  
 and meeknesse say, It's the Lords  
 dealing, let him do what he will.  
 What cross or calamity soever befall  
 us in this life, is endured with  
 more easinesse, if we consider that  
 Providence takes notice of it; and  
 it be for righteousness sake, will  
 not only relieve us, but reward

For our sufferings. Very rarely hath any Child of God, fainted under affliction, that hath but seriously eyed Providence in its several *dispensations*, and faithfully endeavoured to make such an holy use of them, as becomes those that live under the Government of such a ruling Majesty. It's true, Gods waies are as farre above our waies, as heaven is above earth, and therefore are not so easie to be discerned by the sonnes of men, yet a steadfast and well-grounded faith will very much supply our defects in this particular; and we may neverthelesse justly admire, what we cannot fully comprehend: and this may be taken for granted, that there is not any imaginable accident in the world, that befalls those that have an interest in God, but it hath a secret saving end in it, though it is not immediately made obvious to the eyes of those it respects; nay, though it carry never so seeming an antipathy, as to their wills and propensions. All men naturally desire to enjoy health, without which all



other outward enjoyments have  
 relish, yet, Sacred Providence  
 find that bodily sicknesse is essential  
 to our souls health. Life is likewise  
 much esteemed by us, but if He that  
 gave it, hath appointed that nothing  
 less then death can render us glorious,  
 sure we ought to be well satisfied.  
 We cannot but betray a weakness  
 of weakness, if we do not express an  
 earnest and real willingness, to part  
 with a life, of a span long (which  
 for the most part is attended with  
 trouble and grief) for that which  
 full of bliss to all eternity. Whatever  
 soever the dealings of the Almighty  
 are, they should have a sanctifying  
 influence upon our hearts. A humble  
 and serious observation of every  
 step of Gods providence, will much  
 improve our spiritual stock, and enable  
 us to bear any condition with  
 comfort. Although our sufferings  
 be of an high nature, and never  
 much aggravated by circumstances  
 though our nearest Relations should  
 hold us in contempt, our family  
 Friends should despise us, and in

of lending us relief, (as much as in them lies) adde to the measure of our afflictions: and though all outward meanes, which we use for our own recovery deny us help, and utterly faile our expectation; yet the consideration that God hath an hand in all this, and that by his wise Providence, he can reduce it to our good, and make us happy in the midst of our unhappinesse, will abundantly quiet our souls and engage us to look above all second causes. Thus we see what a soveraigne remedy this is, against all disasters that may encounter us in this distracted world.



### 9. PARAGRAPH.

There is no estate whatsoever, from whence we may not extract some advantage. Poverty is the least desirable of any, and yet from this (if it be not in the utmost extremity)



much benefit may be reaped. The poor man that enjoies but little of the world, is first freed from those terrible heart-breaking and soule distracting fears, that frequently attend those of the richer sort, who many times suffer a deprivation of their wits, out of an apprehension they have of parting with their substance, and so cast themselves into a deep degree of misery; when the poor man rests quietly, and sleeps securely and seldome or never meets with any such terrours by day, or affrightments by night. And thus again, he's free from those solicitations and *turmoiling* cares that inseparably wait on full estates.

He that hath riches upon the best termes, that this life can allow, is subject to many troubles and cares, solicitations about the due ordering, and right managing of that store which the Almightyes bounty hath furnished him withall. He considers that a great weight lies upon him, and that an exact account of his behaviour will one day be called for.

But the troubles which follow wicked worldly men are insufferably more grievous, those are of a more perplexing and destroying nature, racking their joints and harazingevery part, when the poor mans care is only to purchase so much with his paines and industry as may keep him honest, and in some small measure maintain himself and his charge; and if at any time a better morsel be afforded to sweeten his courser fare, he sits down exceedingly rejoiced, and sends up as many or more hearty thanks to God, ( the great Giver of all) as he that hath fed deliciously and feasted on the choicest dishes all his daies. There is not the meanest mercy that an honest poor man meetes with, but he highly values, and raises it to a rich esteem: when on the other hand, great mercies are very little or none at all regarded by those that are worldly-minded and fatted up with the fulnesse of the earth; so strangely do the hearts and mindes of men become corrupted.

But to trace poverty a little far-



ther, I have sometimes taken occasion to converse with people of very poor and narrow fortunes (as to the world) such as indeed have looked very neer an extremity. And I cannot but admire to think how abundantly well satisfied they have been with their condition, and have expressed more of spiritual worth, then thousands that have moved in a far higher Orbe; (in respect of temporals. Certainly this can be esteemed no lesse then a very great benefit, when men so low in the eyes of the world live so high in the eyes of their Maker, and it must be imputed to the extraordinary goodnesse of God, that he furnisheth them with such proportionable support, to keep their spirits from fainting, and their soules from sinking in such outward adverse conditions. When great men hoist their top-sail and launch forth into the main, having the spacious clew, which they spread, exposed to the violence of wind and weather, the poor man sailes neer the shore, and when an angry storm threatens



threatens, puts into the next creek, and in a calme security wears out the extremity of the Tempest, whilest he observes prouder vessels miserably tossed, and many times fatally wracked. Nor is it a small benefit, that the poor man is freed from the peril of hateful contrivances and spiteful machinations, the *Nimrods* of the world think him too inconsiderable to take notice of; no man will sharpen his axe to cut down such a shrub: It is the lofty *Cedars* and large Timber of the world that have most cause to fear hewing. He fears not the danger of a fall that lies flat to the ground. Besides it cannot but have a very close reflection upon any spirit (though but morally ingenious) to trample upon those, whom the Almighty hath already laid so low. Sure it is an high degree of aggravation, for any one to harbour a thought of adding misery to those, that are in any measure miserable: and whoever becomes guilty of this; will one day be sadly sensible of it. Christian Prudence and compassion



passion teaches this Lesson, that whenever we see a Child of God under affliction, we should be earnest by all possible means to administer relief and hold forth succour: by this we do not onely help the distressed (which is great satisfaction) and imitate our *Saviour*, but also gain further interest in the Father of mercies.

Another singular benefit that ariseth to those of a low and mean condition; is this, they have lesse interruption and more freedome in their recourse to heaven, then those which are clogg'd with the incumbring cares and *mammon* of the world. The poor man, his affections being not glued to the things below, in his secret addresses soares heaven-ward, and there findes such inestimable riches as worldly men are not worthy of; and though for the present he enjoyeth but in part; yet he is satisfi'd of a fuller fruition hereafter when all created powers are dissolved, and earthly advantages fled away. And then again, those persons that are accounted

ed so despicable here, cannot but receive a great support from those gracious promises which are recorded in *Holy Writ*, and do more immediately respect them than others. The poor and needy are pronounced blessed, and have assurance given that the Lord will deliver them in time of trouble. And though they should be denyed the very crummes that fall from the rich mans table; yet hereafter to be happyed with such a receptacle as *Abraham's Bosome*, must needs be accounted a full compensation for all their sufferings.



#### 10. PARAGRAPH.

IN the next place, the better to beget a satisfaction, I would have *all* men seriously consider, what a small pittance will suffice nature; and certainly whatsoever exceeds that, is meerly matter of opinion. The Apostle *Paul* gives out this charge, that  
ha-



\* 1 Tim. 6. \* having food and raiment we should  
 9. be therewith content. Nature can  
 for no more, then what may lend  
 us nourishment, and hide our naked-  
 nesse; It's only our wanton will  
 that render us guilty of a fastidious  
 choise: and when they cannot attain  
 to that they rove after, then our  
 condition becomes implacable. What  
 a madnesse is this in any person liv-  
 ing to be both Author and promo-  
 ter of his own disturbance; to give  
 so much way to a peevish perverted  
 will, as to distract his whole course  
 and make him not only a servant, but  
 a slave to its imperious tyrannical in-  
 trusions?

It would contribute much more  
 to our satisfaction, if we laboured  
 to put a restraint upon our wills, that  
 they run not into such exorbitances  
 nor affect such superfluities. And  
 ancient stories relate, that those *ANACHORETS*  
 of old, that retired  
 into desarts, and sustained nature  
 with the sparest diet that those places  
 could afford; lived longer then  
 others, who usually stifled themselves  
 with



with a gluttonous variety. How often have we seen poor industrious people, whose fare hath been as hard as their labour, enabled with a greater measure both of health and strength, then those that have fed daintily, and lived as idly all their daies? If it were duely considered how pernicious an enemy Excesse is, and how destructive both to nature and grace; we should rather decline it, then so vehemently thirst after it; and learne to lymit our desires within moderate bounds; and so we should find mediocrity and ease. Extremes on all hands are not only dangerous, but deadly. And without doubt if we could but once reduce our mindes to a satisfaction in those things which are onely necessary, and there acquiesce; our conditions would be farre more comfortable and wellpleasing both to our selves and others. For as one well observes, he is not rich that hath much, but he that desires not much. And the best and truest measure of having or desiring is not what we would, but



ut what we ought : And if we were brought to this rule, we should be so farre from being solicitous for the acquiring great things, that we should rather sleight them ; and account it much greater advantage to enjoy a mean, then to ryot in abundance.

It is a most pernicious temper in any one to let his affections run after variety, when much lesse may rationally suffice. It's only nature in its depraved condition that hunts after novelty; and such is our misery that we want propension as well as power to restrain it. Therefore it should be our daily task to implore help from that Majesty, that can with more ease give it, then we desire it, whereby we may be enabled in some good measure to set limits to our craving mindes; that they may not hurry us on to such a prodigious Excesse, which rather serves to encrease our trouble, then give quiet to our condition. When we observe a poor man (as the world accounts him ) by his care and industry, so

to husband and manage one small patch or parcel of earth, as to raise thence provision for all his *household* uses, with meat and medicine, oile and honey; how can we with any face of reason or modesty desire to *glut* our selves with such a confluence as would comfortably support many? Certainly this is a crime of an higher consequence, then we are apt to imagine, and ought to be overruled, before it grow too monstrous; otherwise it will be very difficult to subdue. Let me adde one suppositi- on more to this particular, and so leave it. Admit we had the actual possession of as much as our desires extend to, and were withall deny- ed hearts (which is the heaviest *curse* that can be) to dispence it towards those that are reduced to extream want; and suppose them to be such, as may in many respects, deserve better then our selves, and yet rea- dy to perish for want of succour; Oh! then let's consider what an in- sufferable burthen this would be to a conscience that is not fear'd, to  
any



any heart that is not totally obdurate and hardened beyond all degrees of sense and commiseration. Behold how formidable is it to conceive what a vast disproportion this carries to the sacred Will of the Almighty.

And how inconsistent it is, that course a Christian should observe; and how impossible it will be to give a just account at the great and terrible day of Judgement, when a Summons shall issue from the high Court of Heaven, to require all that inhabit every corner of the World to attend before that Great TRIBUNAL, and answer for all things done and passed in their lives, where every action that hath slept in silence, shall be discovered, and the secrets of all hearts laid open.



## II. PARAGRAPH.

From what I have said appears, how little may suffice: beyond which, whatsoever we desire, renders us guilty of the sin of Excesse. Now it may be objected, that it is not so much the want of substance, as other crosses and calamities, that disturb and perplex the condition of men in this life. To which I answer, that (however we conceive) afflictions are absolutely necessary to those that sojourn in this *Tabernacle* of clay; and the very observation of God's dispensing them will tend much to satisfaction. He does it so seasonably, and so intermixes them with his Favours, that none but ill-natured children can grudge or repine at

\* He does not alwaies chide us \*Psa. 103.  
saies the *Psalmist*, ) we have more  
smiles then frownes from the beauti-  
face of the Almighty. It was a  
G most



most excellent answer, ( and that which carryed a most high evidence of Christianity ) wherewith Patient Job stopped the querulous mouth of his impatient wife. *What ! (saith he) shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evill ? Suppose a man hath for the greatest part of his life enjoyed health ( which is the summe of earthly blessings ) and towards his declension may be seized on with some afflicting malady or distemper ; shall this man add weight to the measure of his misery ? O no, let him rather kisse the rod, and acknowledge all Gods dealings to be just, and account it a mercy that he hath been spared, till the evening of his age. The very corruption we brought with us into the world besides those daily actual enormities whereof we are guilty, carry enough to reduce us to a continuall torment; so that we have very good ground to blesse God for those light and short afflictions we are subjected to. For they are a special means to give us a better understanding*



that over-ruling hand, that wounds and heales, yea, even kills and cures at pleasure. They learn us also more truly to know our selves, and to confesse that we are but clay in the hands of the Potter, who may fashion and mould us as he pleaseth; and make us vessels of honour, or dishonour, happy or miserable, without the least check to his justice, or prejudice to his Providence. Me thinks it's a great shame to Christians, that they should be lesse sensible of Gods various actings and dispensations, then the very Heathens, who by the glimpse of nature, and their own experience, could in some measure observe the change and intercourse of the Almightyes proceedings, and make some use of them.

It is storyed of *CAMIL LVS*, that after he had upon a tedious ten years siege, taken the opulent City of *EJOS*; prayed that some misfortune might befall himselfe and *ROME*, the better to qualifie and temper so great an happinesse.

And *ALEXANDER* the Great,  
                   G 2                                   upon



upon a Recount of those wonder  
 victories and high Atchievements  
 wrought by his Armies, could  
 to his *JUPITER*, to interm  
 some ill newes with that which w  
 so happy. If such men as these, coul  
 through their dark principles con  
 clude it best, that blessings should  
 attended with crosses ; Then mu  
 more we, that have a fuller degre  
 of illumination.

Nor is it enough to endure cross  
 patiently; but according to our S  
 viour's direction be ever ready  
 take up the crosse, and account  
 our highest happinesse when we su  
 fer, especially for the Testimon  
 of *CHRIST* or a good confes  
 sion.

Afflictions ( if they be not of  
 overpressing nature ) are an Excelle  
 meanes to keep the heart in orde  
 and to provoke us to a more str  
 and frequent course in our addres  
 to *HEAVEN*; where we shall me  
 with such a glorious compensatio  
 for all our suffering, as no heart  
 able to conceive, nor tongue expre



such a recompence (I say) to which all imaginary earthly felicities, cannot carry the least equality or proportion. And that we may not doubt of this, the blessed Apostle St. Paul, directly assures us, \* That *our light affliction that is but for a moment, workes for us, a farre more exceeding, eternall weight of glory.* I heartily wish that this expression may be effectually thought on: for I never read any sentence in Scripture fuller then this, or that carries such efficacy and power in every word: *A farre more exceeding, eternall weight of glory.* Do but observe, how every word rises a degree higher then other, till it come to the height of Eternity it self. This is a singular comfort for Christians, that though sorrow and heavinesse may seize on them for a night; yet joy comes in the morning, and continues with them for a longer term; which ought to engage every heart to overflowe with thankfulness, and comfortably digest small troubles, out of a lively sense of future blessings.

\* 2 Cor. 4.

17.



Why should we murmur at per-  
grievances, when the Author to

\* Heb. 2. *Hebrewes* tells us, \* the Captain  
10. *our salvation*, ( *Jesus Christ* ) was made

\* Heb. 12. *perfect through sufferings*? \* H E endured

2. the Crosse, and despised the shame  
for the joy that was set before H I M

And that we which were fettered in  
chaines of iniquity, and bond-slaves  
to sinne and Satan, might be freed  
from that thralldome, and delivered  
from destruction.



## 12. PARAGRAPH.

FOR our further satisfaction, let  
us consider what worthy examples  
we may meet with, that have been  
content in their greatest extremities

\* 1 Kings 17.6.15. &c. Did not the Prophet \* *Elijah* receive  
food from *Ravens*, and after that  
his meat from the poor widow

\* 1 Kings 18.13. *SAREPTA*? Were not an \* hundred men of the LORD'S Prophets  
( when *Jesebell* endeavoured to destroy them

them) hid by fifty in a cave, and fed with bread and water? And was not a few barley loaves and small fishes, a poor repast for our SAVIOUR S Company, (which were four thousand upon record?) And was it not hard for that glorious Apostle St. Paul, to apply his hands to Tent-making, to procure food for his belly? Yet in all these we do not find the least repining, or any expressions of discontent.

Further let's fix our eyes upon the highest example that ever was, and that's the Eternall SON of GOD, Who took upon him the form of a Servant, and became poor that we might be made rich, suffered the most vile and ignominious death, that we might enjoy Everlasting Life: HE that could command Heaven and Earth, and all the Treasures and Precious things in them, that could by the word of HIS Mouth have erected the Stateliest Magnificent Palace, that ever any Earthly Monarch had, or any eyes beheld; yea he that could have brought down a



*Celestiall Tabernacle*, and have pitched  
it here belowe, saies to the certain

\* Mat. 8. Scribe in *St. Matthews Gospel*, \* T  
20. Foxes have holes, and the Birdes of the  
aire have nests; but the SON of Man  
(meaning himself) hath not where  
to lay his head. This did our blessed  
SAVIOR suffer, that our want  
might be sanctified to us, and that  
HE might learn us contentation  
in our lowest condition.

If we cast our eyes upon Men  
merely morall, (whereof History  
makes large mention) we may find  
to what an height they attained in  
this vertue, & how they have run away  
with great losses and extream poverty  
as inconsiderable sleight burthens,  
and out of a willing choise have  
freely embraced those conditions,  
which others that perhaps have been  
esteemed more Christian, have star-  
tled at and endeavoured to avoid  
with much dreadfulness. Do not  
we then deserve to have this recorded  
to our utter shame, that PAGANS  
should outstrip us in those practises  
that so neerly concern us? Do we  
observe

observe an *ARISTIPPUS* drowning his Gold in the Sea, that it may not drown him? And do we hear a *DEMOCRITUS* confidently affirm, that the way to be rich, is to be poor in desires, and can we forbear to wonder? What an admirable saying, was that of *ONESICRITUS*, a very *Indian*? The earth is to me (saith he) as the mother to the child; for the mother supplees her Infant with milke: so the earth yeelds me all necessaries. And when *ALEXANDER* the Great, would have given him Gold, *Periwade* (saith he) if thou canst these Birds to accept thy silver and Gold, that they may sing the sweeter; If thou canst not do that, why shouldst thou think me worse then them? And further asserts, that our desires as to riches and the like, proceed from the wantonnesse of our own wills, to which no boundes can be set, and not so much from any motion of Nature; and proves it by this *ARGUMENT*: Natural hunger when we have taken Food, ceaseth. And if our mindes



minde did also naturally desire  
**G O L D**, then so soon as  
 had received it, our Appetites,  
 to that, would presently cease; but  
 such a distance are we from the  
 Temper, that the more we have  
 the more without intermission we  
 inordinately crave, and thus  
 after.

This was an Excellent **D I S**  
**C O U R S E**, if we consider it pro-  
 ceeding from an Heathen, and in-  
 deed such as might very well be-  
 come a **CHRISTIAN**. Hence  
 I passionately wish, that all (be-  
 especially those that make a Pro-  
 fession of **H O L Y N E S S E**)  
 would abhorre to fix their sole af-  
 fections, upon such worthlesse tran-  
 sitory things; and be convinced how  
 unsatisfying they are, and learn to  
 entertain afflictions with joy.



## 13. PARAGRAPH.

**H**AVING now runne through most  
 of those Grievances and per-  
 plexities, that are apt to distract us  
 in our lives, and also taken notice  
 how fraile and fading all sublunary  
 things are : And likewise having en-  
 deavoured to raise some matter for  
 satisfaction in our deepest exigences,  
 from the consideration of those no-  
 bler things, that are of a more du-  
 rable and heavenly concernment : I  
 shall next survey that condition  
 which of all other seemes most terri-  
 ble, and is therefore termed the  
 KING of Fear, and that is Death  
 it self, whose very name is at-  
 tended with trembling ; in respect  
 of which all the afflictive incidences  
 of mans life, carry little or no pro-  
 portion. And so it is indeed more  
 formidable then I can expresse, to  
 those that have not some assurance  
 of



of a better life, that are not furnished with spiritual Armour for this last encounter. But I shall make it appear, it's much otherwise to those that have an interest in CHRIST; who consider the unavoidable necessity of it; grounded upon that unalterable Eternal Decree of Heaven; And, that \* *all men are appointed once to dy.* They are so farre from desiring an exemption from that condition, that they are said in Scripture to wait and long for it. There are two especial daies, for which the Children of G O D are said to wait.

\* The first is the day of death, wherein they go to the L O R D.

The second is the day of appearing, wherein the L O R D shall come to them.

\* They sojourne in the body, more weary of it, then *David* was of his dwelling in the Tents of K E D A R;

\* Job 14. they waite with patient \* *Job*; till  
14. the day of their change come, and  
\* Phil. 1. desire with the Apostle to be \* dissol-  
23. ved and be with CHRIST; yea  
they



they pray for it, so often as they mention that petition: \* *Let thy Kingdome come.* They labour after death, so far, as it may be a meanes to abolish sin, that **C H R I S T** their **K I N G** may alone reign in, and over them. It is neverthelesse true, that wicked and irreligious persons, put the remembrance of death far from them; yet for all that it comes upon them suddenly, as \* *Jebu* furiously came upon *Jehoram*, though they run to their Chariots, (that is) their Refuges of vanity; Death's dart surely overtakes them. But the good *Israelites* of **G O D** desire to be ever prepared, with their \* loines gird- ed, and their staves in their hands, ready to take their journey from **E G Y P T** to **C A N A A N**, whenever the Majesty of the Most High **G O D** shall command them. As fowles desirous to fly, stretch forth their wings; so do these extend their affections towards **H E A V E N**.

\* *Abraham* late in the dore of his Tabernacle, when the Angell appeared to him; \* *Elias* came out to the

\* Mat. 6.  
10. & Lu.  
11. 3.

\* 2 Kings  
23. 24.

\* Exod.  
12. 11.

\* Gen. 18.  
1.

\* 1 Kings  
19. 9.



the mouth of his Cave, when the L O R D appeared to him: so should we rejoyce and be glad to come out of the Cave and Tabernacle of this wretched body, that we may meet with the L O R D of Glory. This Messenger ( D E A T H ) cures all our Maladies, and rescues us from all our fears and dangers; This is that Cherub, that stands Centinell at the Gate of Paradise: There's no entrance but under his hand. There's no passage to those glories above but through the Gates of Death here below. .

\* But that which renders death yet more desirous to the Godly, is the second day ( which they are said to wait for. ) And that's C H R I S T S second coming. The Apostle gives this as a Token of the rich Grace of G O D, bestowed on the Corinthians, \* that they waited for the appearance of C H R I S T, yea he gives it out as a mark of all those that shall be glorified,

\* 1 Cor.  
1.7.

\* 2 Tim. 4.8. fyled, when he saies, \* There is laid up for me a Crowne of Righteousnesse, and not for me only; but all those, that love Christ



Christs second appearing. And again, \* \* Heb. 9.  
 CHRIST was offered to take away 28.

the sins of Many; and unto them that look  
 for HIM, shall HE appear without sin  
 unto salvation. Amongst the Jewes as  
 the day of \* Jubilee drew nigh: so  
 the joy of those that were in prison \* Lev. 25.  
 encreased; for that it brought them 10.  
 an assurance of relief. Much more  
 cause have we to rejoyce, the neerer  
 the day of our *Eternall Jubilee* ap-  
 proaches, when all teares shall be  
 wiped from our eyes, and sorrow  
 and mourning shall fly away for  
 ever.

But to encounter a little further  
 with this great Combatant; first I  
 say, that Death which the righteous  
 suffer, is not total; for it can never  
 strike the whole man; but onely the  
 weakest part, his body: the more  
 excellent part, the soul, is partaker of  
 Eternal Life.

Nor secondly is it perpetual; for  
 our soules shall not abide under the  
 Bonds of Death: the spirit of Christ  
 that dwells in us, shall raise us up,  
 and cloath us with Immortality.  
 There



There is begun in the Children of  
 Light, a life, which no death is ever  
 able to extinguish; though it may  
 invade the vital, natural powers of  
 the *body*, and suppress them one after  
 another, and at last break in upon  
 this lodging of clay, and demolish  
 it to the ground; yet that man of  
 G O D which dwells in the Body  
 shall escape with his life. Though  
 the Tabernacle is cast down, (which  
 is the worst our enemy can do) yet  
 he that dwelt in it is removed to  
 better. As the Bird escapes out of  
 the snare of the Fowler: so the soul in  
 death flies away with joy to her Maker.  
 The dissolving of the body, to the  
 Children of G O D is but the un-  
 folding of the net, and breaking o-  
 pen the Prison wherein they have  
 been detained, that so they may be  
 delivered from that Captivity. Here  
 comfort in abundance, for all those  
 whose consciences can give evidence  
 of their well-led lives. And for those  
 also whose peace is made with G O D  
 through C H R I S T, by means of  
 those two powerful Mediatours,  
 I plead.



steadfast faith, and unfained repentance.

The Apostle *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Romanes*, gives us this assurance, \* *That being Justified by Faith, we have* \* Ro. 5.1.  
*peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*; The efficacy of whose death effectually applyed to our souls, will sufficiently season and sanctify death unto us. For how can we possibly fear that enemy, whom our Redeemer hath already conquered? As in the battel betwixt our \* Saviour and \* Gen. 3.  
 Satan, Satan's head was bruised, and he did no more then tread on the heele of our Saviour, so shall it be in the conflict of all his members. By the power of the Lord Jesus, we shall be more then Conquerours. The \* *God of our peace shall tread downe* \* Ro. 16.  
*Satan under our feet*: There is a seed 20.  
 of immortal life in our soules, which no power of the Enemy is ever able to overcome. So soon as we lanch forth of this life, we arrive at the blessed Haven of everlasting happiness, where there is a Glory for all those that are heires of the Promise,  
 H which



which is both infinite, and incomprehensible.



#### 14. PARAGRAPH.

**T**HUS I have in some measure made it evident, how advantageous the day of dissolution is to the Children of God; and therefore cannot but wonder, how any, upon solid grounds, can desire a continuance in this valley of tears; especially, if they consider also the many miseries and inconveniencies, that are incident both to soul and body in this life, and the irreconcilable enmity that is betwixt them in the Conjunction; As the Apostle Paul observes in his Epistle to the Galatians

\* Gal. 5. \* *The flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that we cannot do the things we would: for such and so many continued jars are betwixt them, that they are ever*

pro



prone to exhibit Articles of *impeachment* against each other. The soul it complaines of that Original guilt and corruption, which was translated upon humane nature, through *Adams* transgression, wherewith it was not tainted, nor defiled, as it came only from the *Immaculate* hands of its pure Creator. And then again, the soul saies, had it been single without this earthly Partner, it had never had that propension to sin, nor that inclination to rebellious actings against the Majesty of Heaven; nor that *aversnes* and *indisposition* to good; Nor had its understanding (as to those spiritual things which pertain to God) been so eclipsed and benighted at the noon-day of such Glorious Dispensations; Nor had it been lyable to such distracting cares, and such discomposing passions, which bring forth stormes and terrible Tempests that dayly threaten its ruine and destruction.

These & such like complaints hath the soul against the body, the spirit against the *flesh*. There is *amongst many*



more, another particular which we have just cause to resent with much reluctancy:

This burden of flesh, this house of clay retards our glory, and for a time, secludes us from our *Celestiall* Mansion. \* For we know (saies that  
 \* 2 Co. 5. 1. & 6. Great Apostle) that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of G O D, an house not made with hands, eternall in the Heavens. And a little after that, saies, While we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; from that Lord which inhabites that *Celestiall* house (before mentioned) to all eternity. O! Of what excellent use it would be, if we seriously considered that word ETERNITY! It is of that extent, that no men, nor Angels, are able to expresse, being so farre beyond the reach of all conception. For if all men in the world were exact *Arithmeticeans*, and were imploied all their lives to adde number to number, and multiply years, the product of all their labours, and the total summe of all their Accounts (in



( in respect of time ) would not carry the least proportion to E T E R N I T Y. Or if the mighty masse of whole earth, were contracted into one heap, & all that *translated* into such sand as lies by the sea-shore, one single small Bird would remove it all, grain by grain, before E T E R N I T Y lookes towards an end.

Having already taken notice of those disadvantages, that unavoidably attend us, during the time that our souls and bodies are conjoined, that is, our pilgrimage in this world: We have so little cause to keep our desires at a distance from our dissolution ( especially if we have any comfortable assurance of an interest in heaven ) that on the contrary, we may justly rejoyce, when that day approaches, and the houre draws nigh, wherein we shall be happily freed, not onely from the guilt, but also ( which to a good soul is singular comfort ) the temptations and occasions of sinne. Then shall that interposing veile, be either made transparent, or drawn quite from



our eyes, that we may with clear-  
 nesse and perspicuity discern the glo-  
 rious sunshine of God's favour, and  
 passe under the tender appellation  
 of dear Children; and \* *if children,*  
 Rom. 8. *then beires, beires of God, and joint-beirs*  
 17. *with Christ, being freed from the spi-*  
*rit of bondage again to fear, and fil-*  
*led with the spirit of adoption, where-*  
*by we cry Abba, Father.*



### 13. PARAGRAPH.

\*  
 \*  
 And that we may be capable of  
 such a *Celestiall* Estate, It con-  
 cernes us first to be truly humble, to  
 harbour a mean esteem of our selves  
 and to set a rich value upon every  
 mercy we receive; and let the least  
 mercy (which is more then we de-  
 serve) be an engagement upon our  
 soules to walke in a more constant  
 course of Holynesse, to the Glory of  
 HIM that is the Author of all our



good. That spirit is far from Christian, that stands upon termes with his maker, that dare look upon the least blessing with a disdainful aspect, or upon the greatest crosse with indignation. It is an humble soul and a meek spirit that are highly acceptable to God, and where these dwell, Grace ever attends them, and that in a full measure.

He that hath a sense of his own unworthynesse, and considers sinne as it offends the mercifull God of Heaven; lookes upon every exemption from evil, as a mighty mercy, and every chastisement for sinne as a blessing. And if precept will not engage us to be humble; we have the most powerful and prevailing example, that ever was exposed to imitation, and that's our Saviour Christ; with what abundance of humility HE endured all HIS suffering, Holy Writ makes plentiful mention. Who then would not be willing to tread in his Saviours steps, as knowing that it is the surest way to glory? He that humbles himself shall un-

H 4                      doubtedly



doubtedly be exalted, as in the General Epistle of St. James : \* *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and HE shall lift you up. And again, God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.*

And that which will further conduce to our happiness, is a state of self-resignation. He that in the midst of all adverse conditions, can cast himselfe into the hands of his God, shall not faile to find support and comfort. HE best knowes how to dispose of us. Natural men in their exigences are prone to make application, and have recourse to those which have greater Authority and power then themselves, though they have no assurance of relief from them: but certainly they have no sense of their own happiness, that will not trust themselves with the Lord, who does not only allow; but solicit their relyance on him: Witnessse that Text in the Epistle to the Philippians, \* *Be careful (saies the spirit of God) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer, and supplication, with thanks-*

\* *Phi. 4. 6. Philippians, \* Be careful (saies the spirit of God) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer, and supplication, with thanks-*



thanksgiving, let your requests be made  
 known unto God. There is no affliction  
 on can possibly seize on us, whereof  
 our heavenly Father takes not strict  
 notice, and weighs every dramme  
 thereof, in the scale of his Divine  
 Providence (which I have before  
 more particularly insisted on) which  
 consideration alone is sufficient to  
 preserve our spirits from sinking.  
 He that can steadfastly believe, needs  
 not fear; for he shall have deliverance,  
 in the greatest extreimity.  
 And as the Author to the *Hebrewes*  
 observes, \* *Faith is the substance of* \* He. I I. I.  
*things hoped for, the evidence of things*  
*not seen.* It's that by which deliverance  
 subsists, in the womb or in  
 the bowels of the promise, before it  
 be brought forth for our reliefe and  
 succour. He that upon Christian  
 grounds casts his care upon God,  
 shall never lose his reward. That  
 spirit shall not want support in the  
 crossiest occurrences. It is not the  
 severest persecution of our enemies;  
 nor the sad desertion of our Friends  
 and humane confidence; nor dis-  
 con-



consolate captivity; nor wandering  
banishment; nor pale-faced sickness  
nor the deprivation of all earthly  
endearments, that can set us at a

\* Psal. 68. with our God, if we trust in him,  
20. *bath the issues of death in his hand, &c*  
faithfully promised that \* H E

\* He. 13. 5. never leave us, nor forsake us, but  
compass us with his everlasting kin-  
dness, and who will convert our dar-  
kest night into chearful day, and our  
greatest sorrow into refreshing joy.  
Moreover if we can by faith make  
Christ ours, we shall purchase the  
whereof the world is not worthy,  
but though I said purchase, it shall  
be without price, according to the  
remarkable place in the Prophecy of  
Isaiah, that glorious invitation to  
all those that long after Christ, that

\* Isa. 55. 1. \* *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye  
to the waters, and he that hath no money,  
come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine  
and milk without money and without price.*  
If we take this in a spiritual sense,  
we shall find that Jesus Christ is  
in all. H E is food, rayment, health,  
liberty, protection, preservation



direction, provision, \* *Wisdom*, \* I Cor. I.  
 strength, righteousness, sanctification,  
 redemption and salvation unto life. H E

30.

heales all our wounds, binds up all  
 our breaches, cures all our maladies,  
 and by the effectual power of H I S  
 spirit, crucifies our lusts, regulates  
 our wild affections, kills our base  
 corruptions, and through his mercy,  
 restrains us from those nefarious a-  
 ctions, and rebellious courses, to  
 which our defiled natures prompt  
 us. H E is that true riches in respect  
 of which all the riches of the world,  
 are but contemptible dross, and  
 carry no comparison. The Heavens  
 are His habitation, the Earth is His  
 foot-stool, and He sits on that *Cele-  
 stiall Throne* with His Father, and  
 there reserves seats for all those that  
 have an interest in him, to be ever-  
 living partners of his Glory. Who  
 then would not lay out all his stock  
 to purchase this Pearl, spend all his  
 time, extend all his endeavours, and  
 apply himself to the use of all possi-  
 ble means, to arrive at this Haven of  
 happynesse, and become partaker  
 of



of this Everlasting Blisse ?



# 16. PARAGRAPH.

**T**hen let the consideration of the  
 Glory hereafter, carry us on  
 an holy and resolved acquiescency  
 that condition that our heavenly  
 Father appoints us in this life,  
 esteeming it of all other the best. Are  
 we lowe ? Let not our envy feed  
 on those that are advanced to  
 higher pitch. Are we exalted ? Let  
 in no measure contemne those that  
 live in a meaner state. Are we sick  
 Let's not quarrel with the *Physitian*  
 Are we in health ? Let's not abuse  
 it. Are we in outward distresses ? Let  
 patiently look up to him, that by  
 his Providence orders all Events  
 Let our wils and understandings render  
 an absolute submission to his *most*  
*Sacred Will*. We have no power  
 all to determine what is fittest for us  
 in our *Pilgrimage*. Flesh and blood

re the most incompetent Judges in  
 the world, as to that particular. It  
 onely the infinite wisdom of the  
 great *Arbiter* of the universe, that  
 can best allot us our portions. He  
 only knowes how, where and when  
 to dispence favours and inflict pu-  
 nishments. His heavenly will is the  
 most absolute rule of justice. We  
 have not the least cause to complain,  
 if our outward Man suffer some cha-  
 rishment, so that the Inner Man may  
 be more thoroughly renewed. But  
 alas! Such is the temper of some  
 men, that if they enjoy all they wish  
 for, they would be thence transport-  
 ed to such an imperious height of  
 pride and *Prodigious Impiety*, that the  
 very earth would groan to beare  
 them; some there are likewise, that  
 if they endured such an heavy mea-  
 sure of affliction as others, would  
 grow irrecoverably desperate. In this  
 therefore, doth the great wisdom and  
 mercy of God eminently appear, that he  
 sends every man with such a condition,  
 which is most agreeable and contributory  
 to the advancement of his Glory,  
 and



and their own Good. And though by reason of that thick darknesse our understandings and the dimness of our apprehensions, we cannot perspicuously discern these various dealings and distributions of the Almighty; yet such they are, & do stridently challenge our serious observations; and whoever is negligent herein, betraies not only his grosse ignorance, but hateful ingratitude.

When on the other hand, he diligently eyes the diversity of dispensations, and with his whole heart faithfully and savingly intends that which hath already attained to a good improvement.

Therefore let not our wills, but God's be done; there was never a man unhappy, that was contented disposed to be what God would have him.



**17. PARAGRAPH.**

**T**Here is another particular very necessary to be resolved on ; that is, an abatement of our desires, as to earthly things , especially in such a juncture of time as this is ; When the Captain General of heaven and earth, is in so deep a contest with the whole world, and threatens to dash in pieces all sublunary powers; how farre his Divine judgements have already reached, experience in some measure tells us ; And how Epidemical that stroke may be, is beyond our capacity to determine ; Every day producing new pleadings, and controverlies betwixt God and the world; in so much that the foundation thereof shakes, and all the dominions therof, seem to have the mark of ruine stamped in their aspects; and the Lord knowes how soon ( for our rebellions against heaven have long



long since cryed out for vengeance  
it may be cast into a general con-  
gration; so that it's palpably evident  
we are even now cast upon the ve-  
point or crisis of deliverance, or de-  
struction.

All this being considered, we have  
little reason to advance our desires  
(touching temporals) to such a stu-  
pendious height; but rather with  
Christian discretion set down their  
positive bounds, and say as the Al-  
mighty said to the Sea,\* *Hitbert* sh  
\* Job 38. *you come and no further, and here shall  
your proud waves be staid.* Let's in the  
manner give check to our ambitious  
thoughts, that they may not rove  
such a prodigious rate. For I am  
perswaded, could the vast desires of  
some take effect, so exorbitant they  
are, that if possible, they would en-  
slave the whole world. Be more than  
the sea, which though a raging ele-  
ment, is confin'd within his limits.  
More than the heavens which never  
passe their circumference: yea more  
than the Sunne, which never travel  
beyond the ecliptick. But sure w  
ough



ought to be much otherwise minded, and strive to be of *St. Pauls* temper, who (as one well observes) was the richest poor man that ever lived, as having all *things*, yet possessing nothing. We have it from good Authority, that there is neither safety, nor true pleasure in Excess, (as I have formerly expressed.) Too much is troublesome; what a clogge was to *SARENA* a *Parthian* Lord, (whereof History takes notice) that could never remove his family, with lesse then a thousand Camels? Satisfaction doth not consist in abundance; for a superfluity both of profits and pleasures, hath commonly a very ill influence upon the mind, and is apt to reduce it to a strange kind of debauchery and insatiableness. Too large a quantity of meat (though good) doth as ordinarily offend the weak stomach, as that which is both unsavory and unwholesome. Some Appetites are sooner wearied, when satisfied. He that feeds sparingly, for the most part, is in a better state of health, then he that feeds  
I much,



much; for the latter often gluts  
 over-charges nature, so that inst  
 of receiving nourishment, *she* becom  
 distempered, and runnes forth in  
 diseases. This holds a direct par  
 lel with the desires of men, as  
 other earthly enjoyments. The  
 fore it justly concernes us, to g  
 strict and severe repulses to the  
 overtures and appearances of in  
 dinate desires, and to curb the  
 ruly motions of our hearts in th  
 very infancy, otherwise they w  
 grow too strong and incorrigib  
 and so carry us on to a wild Exce  
 which is not onely dangerous b  
 destructive. But as to spiritual thi  
 our desires can never be inordinat  
 our thirstings and longings af  
 Grace and holynesse, is that sacrifi  
 which of all other, is most pleas  
 to God, and most beneficial to o  
 own immortal soules. This w  
 stand us instead when all transito  
 trash, and vain delights vanish.  
 will be a meanes not only to supp  
 us here, but rejoyce us hereafter. A  
 lastly, we have the greater cause,  
 contr

contract and limit our desires in  
 earthly things, for that the guilt of  
 misinjoying them, will attend us  
 with sorrow to our graves, and af-  
 ter that to the judgement-seat, that  
 Great Tribunall.



### 18. PARAGRAPH.

Therefore since it is necessary, that  
 Nature be kept short of her De-  
 mands: Let's resolve first to deny her  
 small things, and so by degrees we  
 shall be able to overcome her in that  
 wherein otherwise she would grow  
 impetuously violent, and lesse lya-  
 ble to subduction, (but observe I  
 speak of her here in a depraved con-  
 dition.) We shall be in a farre better  
 capacity to encounter with great  
 afflictions, if we exercise our selves  
 with digesting small crosses. He that  
 with a distempered state of body, and  
 applies himself to the advice of his  
 physician, will first take a preparative,



a strong Potion. It is requisite  
 should observe the same course with  
 the troubles that seize upon the mind.  
 petty grievances are endured with  
 more ease, and open a way for  
 patience and further support, under  
 those of a more pressing nature. But  
 that will not suffer a check, nor re-  
 ceive a frown, will hardly take  
 blowe, but retort it with vehemence.  
 Nor will he endure the violence of  
 tempestuous storm, that will not  
 bide a little wet. Those that have  
 lived long in prosperity, and have  
 been thence transported to the  
 of worldly pleasure, seldome over-  
 come meeting with the least gust, or  
 counter-blast of adversity; If after  
 all this, Providence surprize them  
 with some anxious sharpe affliction.  
 Oh! How it presseth them down  
 the earth; and (unlesse they be well  
 principled) distracts all their facul-  
 ties, workes a strange discomposi-  
 tion in all their thoughts, destroies  
 their joy, and hurries them to a de-  
 gree of impatience; and so en-  
 gages them to quarrell with that  
 resistible



resistible Divine hand that strikes; whereby they adde offence to their misery. And much of this may be imputed to their non-acquaintance with former sufferings. He that can discover a calme contented temper, when his friends and intimates taile him, his dear relations disapoint him in those things wherein he promised himself a satisfaction: If he can passe over these and such like occurrences, so as not to be passionately concerned; certainly this man will be in a comfortable capacity to entertain crosses of an heaviour consequence.

I have observed, those that desire to have their Children strong and active, as a means conduceable thereunto; have inured them to pitch barres, to tesse ponderous weights, to handle foiles, and the like; which serves both to extend and strengthen the Nerves, and gives an aptitude to exercises of that nature. Truly, it is not unworthy our imitation in the course of our lives; for if we acquaint our selves with a patient



bearing of those lesser crosse incidences, that unavoidably attend in our *Pilgrimage*; we shall have greater power to deale with, and more Christian fortitude to overcome, the distracting influences of severest troubles.

It was an excellent use (and worth our observation,) that *Socrates* made of the sharp tongues of his wives, (said he) *They prepare my patience for publique sufferings.* It will very much availe us in this particular, if we thwart our *novile* wanton appetites in those things wherein they please so much pleasure, and do curb our curiosity with a delatory forbearance of those seeming contentments which we so fondly affect. Do you (though pleasurable) *delights* prompt us to embrace them? Let's deny our selves the liberty of compliance though they earnestly importune. Let's not gratify our curious humors with the taste of those endearing novelties, that meet us with such insinuating invitations. We have a very memorable Example in *David*



and that which argued a Rare Regiment of his passions; That when he was in extremity of thirst, and longed for refreshment, could say, \* Ob! \* 2 Sma  
*that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the Gate!* But when he perceived that water was purchased with the hazard of the lives, of three of his mighty men, which rushed through the Army of the Philistines to drawe it at the well; being brought unto him, he would not drinke it; but (saies the Text) *poured it unto the Lord.* This was a singular peece of self-denyal in that Good King, to reject the benefit of that he so exceedingly desired, in regard of his thirst; because it was obtained with so much hazard and difficulty, as appears by the subsequent verse: *Be it farre from me, O Lord (saith David) that I should do this. Is not this the bloud of the men that went in jeopardie of their lives? Thus if we can hold a resolution, to put a restraint upon our desires, in those things they so eagerly affect; and with all digest Anxieties of a lighter stamp, and*  
 I 4 make

\* 2 Sma  
 23.15.16.  
 17.



make them preparatory to heavier afflictions, we shall find this course very conduceable to our satisfaction.



### 19. PARAGRAPH.

**N**OW I arrive at the approved Antidote, and Sovereign Remedy for all our Evils; and that's devout praier. Nothing under Heaven will state us in a peaceable quiet condition, if this fail us; without which all our possible endeavours and actions for relief, are perfunctory, vain and fruitlesse. It must be the fervent and faithful supplications of our soules, presented to the Majesty of the Most High God, through the precious merits of Jesus Christ, together with the inoperation of that Holy Spirit, \* from whom, every good gift and every perfect giving proceedeth, that can alone both settle our inward and outward peace, and free us from those

\* Ja. I. 17.



those disturbing perplexities, and distractions, wherewith the world is apt to encounter us. Are we environed, with temptations? Prayer repels their violent assaults. Are we faint and feeble, and compassed about with infirmities? The \* *spirit of God in prayer, helps our infirmities, and makes request for us with sighs, that cannot be expressed.* \* Ro. 8. 26. It is that spirit of Adoption that instructs us how to pray. Prayer is like that \* *Fierie Chariot* \* 2 Ki. 2. wherein *Elijah* was carryed from earth to heaven: For by it, we poor Mortals, are transported to have conversation with God, and to speak with him in a familiar manner; and being in the body, we are carryed out of the body. This praying spirit, presents our sighs, enflames our affections, and whispers words that we are not able to repeat. Whoever speaks against us, it becomes our Advocate, and makes request for us, is a meanes to infatuate the Counsels of all our adversaries, and to remove every prejudice that is cast upon us. All the imaginable malice



malice off men and devils, cannot cut off the Intelligence of a Christian with the Lord: though he be separated from all humane society here below, and lock'd up in some unaccessible cave; yet can no man hinder his access to God, and his address to Heaven. If his tongue should be cut forth of his head; yet his very sighs and groanes (which trouble may encrease, but cannot destroy) will eccho forth his humble requests to the Almighty. This is singular comfort to the Children of God, that when they are cast into that extremity, that neither eye, nor hand, nor tongue, can assist them in prayer; they may consider Good King *Ezekiah*, who was so much weak'ned with bodily diseases, and infirmities, that he could not expresse his mind, nor pray distinctly to his heavenly Father; yet his *mourning like a Dove*,  
*and chattering like a Swallow*, entred into the Lord's ear, and brought him back a comfortable answer. The least word of God, in return of prayer, hath power enough to make the blind

\* Isa. 38. 14. \* *mourning like a Dove*,  
*and chattering like a Swallow*, entred  
 into the Lord's ear, and brought  
 him back a comfortable answer. The  
 least word of God, in return of pray-  
 er, hath power enough to make the  
 blind



blind see, the lame walk, the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, and she that is sick of a Feaver to arise up and minister. We cannot want consolation if we can get grace to pray. For as our supplications ascend, the multiplyed mercies of God descend: light comes to resolve our doubts, resolution to expel our fears, comfort to mitigate our troubles, joy to seclude our sorrowes, meanes to supply our wants, and strength to sustain our weaknesse.

If we converse with Scripture, and Ecclesiastique story, we shall find, what wonderful things have been accomplished by this incomparable Engine.

[a] *Abraham's* praier opened the barren wombs of *Abimelech's* house-hold; and

<sup>a</sup> Gen. 20.  
17. 18.

[b] closed up the hands of the *Angels* who went with a purpose to destroy *Sodom* but could not bring down fire upon it, till righteous *Lot* was removed thence. The prayer of [c]

<sup>b</sup> Gen. 18.  
from 22.  
to 32.

*Moses*; parted the *Red Sea*, and was more forceable to overthrow the

<sup>c</sup> Ex. 14.  
22, 23.

Army of [d] *Amaleck*, then all the weapons of *Israel*. The prayer of

<sup>d</sup> Ex. 17.  
11.

*Joshua*



\* Josh. 10. [e] Joshua made the sun stand still in  
 12. the Firmament. [f] Samuell's pray-  
 f 1Sa. 7. 9, er brought loud thunder, and heavy  
 10, 11. haile-stones upon the Philistines. [g]  
 g Ja. 5. 15, Eliab's prayer closed the heavens for  
 16, 17. the space of three years and six  
 moneths, & opened them again; and  
 this Example St. James applies to e-  
 very Godly man; That we should not  
 think they did these things, by the pri-  
 viledge of their persons, rather then  
 the efficacy of their prayers: he shews  
 that Eliab was a man subject to the  
 same infirmities, whereunto we are  
 subject; and that the prayer of any  
 Godly man availes much; yea (if it  
 be fervent) no lesse then his. And  
 though we work not by prayer such  
 external miracles as he did; yet ther-  
 by we drawe downe inward grace,  
 bringing light to the blind, life to  
 the dead, and workes an admirable  
 change by repentance. It is story-  
 ed of Aurelius Antonius, that in his  
 expedition against the Germans, he  
 had in his Army a Legion of Chri-  
 stians, who by their earnest prayer  
 unto God, obtained rain for the re-  
 freshment



freshment of his Army, when it was like to perish by thirst; and likewise brought down fearful thunderings upon their enemies: Insomuch that ever after, he called that Legion, the  
 \* *Thundering Band.*

\* κεραυνό-  
βολος.

Fulmina-  
trix.

Thus in all ages prayer hath bin so powerful and efficacious, that it hath *sometimes* altered the very course of nature without, and at all times wrought a change of corrupt nature within. Nor can it be otherwise, if we consider the most effectual intercession of our great \* *High-Priest, (Jesus Christ)* who presents our prayers, our praises, duties, services and all our spiritual performances unto God the Father, and procures acceptance of him. At the very instant of our praying, he perfumes the Mercy-Seat (having before sprinkled it with His blood) and mingles our duties with His Intercessions, and together, carries them upon the Golden Censer into the *Holy of Holiest*, and there presents them to his heavenly Father; unto whose sacred presence *He* takes our persons (though not perceived by us)

\* He. 9. 11,  
12.

as



as knowing that if they be not accepted, our prayers *will* not; for though by the Covenant of workes, God did first accept the *work* and then the person, yet in the Covenant of Grace, he first accepts our persons (in His Son) and then our performances. And that which is infinite comfort to every Christian, because that in our best estate, in our most refined Condition here below, we are subject to many failings and imperfections in our holiest duties: Therefore does our Eternal High-Priest, diligently observe what evils, or infirmities attend our prayers, that may any waies interrupt their

\* *Ex. 28* access to heaven, and those he draws  
 & *Mal. 3.* out, and takes quite away, before  
 He present our petitions to His Father. Here is mercy in such eminent manner, as cannot be sufficiently expressed! And this is clearly held forth by that in \* *Exodus*, where the High-Priest, after Moses law (who was a Type of Jesus Christ) took away the iniquities of the Holy things of God's people.

To proceed yet further, there is  
 not



not any thing that can be expressed, that is so highly pleasing to God, as the fervent prayers of his Servants. He delights to have his *Holy Name* called on, and to be conversed with in an humble supplicatory way. We cannot be so ready to expresse our wants, as God will be to relieve us. If we do in faith and humility, implore the throne of Grace, Almighty God, does most certainly, either grant that which we humbly and immediately desire, or in lieu thereof, something of an higher nature, that may more advantage us, or else ( that which is a greater mercy then either of the former ) he sanctifies the want of those things to the satisfaction of our souls.

Seldome or never did any faint under affliction that was attended with a praying spirit ; It is the most powerful help and surest support, that ever Christian was acquainted with. Though all the inveterate persons in the world were joined in a confederacy to contrive our ruine, and left



no probable waies unassayed ,  
 accomplish and effect that end ; y  
 such a regard hath the merciful Ma  
 jesty of our God to the prayers of  
 his Servants, that they shall become  
 a rock to preserve us, and split our  
 enemies, such a rock, that all the  
 weapons and instruments which any  
 can imagine, ( though put into the  
 most dexterous hands ) shall never  
 be able to hewe asunder. At the voice  
 of prayer, the very Gates of heaven  
 fly open, to make way for the ascen  
 sion of our supplications to the most  
 High, at which all the blessed Angels  
 in that *Celestiall Mansion* ( to speak  
 with reverence ) even leap for joy.  
 When we are at the greatest loss  
 either in respect of our spiritual or  
 temporal estate, prayer comfortably  
 recovers us, renews our acquaintance  
 with God; and so enables us to en  
 counter with the greatest difficulties  
 to repel the fiery darts of Satan, and  
 to arme our selves against the de  
 stroying influence of his subtile in  
 finuations, whereby he dayly endea  
 vours to deceive us. It is a meanes



to frustrate the sinful contrivances  
of wicked men, and to make dis-  
covery of their pernicious intend-  
ments, and clandestine practises  
against the righteous, and so pre-  
vents them. It's a special remedy a-  
gainst the insurrection of evill  
thoughts, it crushes and destroies  
them in *embrio*, it strikes them with  
death before they can fully recover  
life; and kills corruptions in the  
bud, before they be full blown. And  
in regard the purest gold, may not  
be altogether free from some drosse,  
effectually refines the earthly part  
of a regenerate man, that he may be  
holly fit for his Masters use. Oh !  
that we could live and die upon this  
subject, in reference to which, time  
would rather faile, then matter to  
discourse of. Therefore since 'tis  
evident, how excellent a meanes  
prayer is against all our inward and  
outward evils, and what a comfort  
in all distresse, let our souls and spi-  
rits give up themselves to a constant  
unconscious, practise in this sa-  
cred acceptable duty, that God may



have the glory, and delight in the worke of his own hands, so shall be happyed to all eternity.



## 20. PARAGRAPH.

**N**OW I come to the last particular I shall insist on, which is this ; That we endeavour by all possible meanes, and resolve through Divine assistance to be truly thankful to God in each condition, to render praise to His Glorious Name, in whatever state soever Providence hath cast us. If there were no other argument in the world to engage us to such a course, this alone were sufficient, which the Apostle Paul asserts in one of his Epistles, thus : [a] In everything give thanks ; for it is the will of God in Christ Jesus, concerning you.

a 1 The. 5.  
18.

Who dares upon reading these words, runne into such a contentment as to violate the Sacred Will of the Most High ? It rather concerne



to give up our lives in an absolute conformity thereunto. [b] *Blesse* <sup>b</sup> Psa. 103. 1.  
*the Lord O my soul (saith David) and all that is within me blesse his Holy Name.*  
 And in another place, [c] *While I live* <sup>c</sup> Psa. 146. 2.  
*will I praise the Lord, I will sing praises to my God, while I have a being.* [d] *d* Psa. 145. 2.  
*Every day will I blesse thee; And I will praise thy Name for ever and ever. He that peruseth the Psalmes of this Sacred Pen-man, shall almost in every page of that book find his earnest and pathetical exhortations to praise God for his Divine love and care, his power and mercy, his Providence, his Word and Ordinances, yea also for troubles, afflictions, and every thing. He exhorts all [e] Celestiall, Rational, e* Psa. 148.  
*and Terrestriall creatures to this Duty; and to perform it upon all kinds of [f] Instruments. Never was any a great- f* Psa. 150.  
*er Scholler in this Schoole, nor a greater Proficient in this work then David, and hath left it as a Rule to all that shall succeed him. Job was of an excellent temper too, who when he had lost his estate, lost his children, and all Relations, that were neer and*  
 K 2 dear



dear to him, could comfortably say  
 § Job 1. [g] *The Lord gives, and the Lord takes*  
 21. *away. Blessed be his name.* Though his enemies  
 increased, and his friends stood  
 off, and he himself almost given  
 to the hands of Satan; yet for all that  
 he *blesseth the Lord*. If we consider the  
 excellencies of God, we have infinite  
 cause to praise him, if we likewise  
 look upon the mercies and benefits  
 we daily receive, we have as much  
 cause to give thanks: There is no  
 condition so *disconsolated*, but attended  
 with some good: No darkness  
 in that extremity, but hath some  
 light: No affliction so miserable  
 but is mingled with mercy; therefore  
 we are engaged to be thankful.  
 Our Saviour Christ could say; when  
 h Ma. 11. *he had not where to lay his head,* [h] *Father*  
 25. *I thank thee.* When he went to his  
 agony, and sweat drops of blood  
 There was (saies the Text) a Psalm  
 of praise. Who would not be willing  
 to follow such a glorious example?  
 There is no affliction that can befall  
 a Christian (though never so sharp  
 and grievous) but is usually attended



ed with this advantage, it gives an opportunity to exercise such graces, as patience and the like; which a prosperous estate seldome or never takes notice of; so that if our tribulation seem to deprive us of one *mercy*, it fits us with another; which may justly call for our thankfulness. Though the children of *Israel* lost their *Moses*, God gave them a *Joshua*; Though he took away *Ely*, he raised up *Samuel*: so that this is but mercy exchanged, to the greater benefit of those it respects. It is Gods way to examine what stock of grace we have, and to make other provision for us accordingly. And if he observe that our gifts, acquirements, and natural parts soar high, and grow strong, and are unwilling to hold proportion with our stock of Grace; then doth he mingle our wine with water, and takes us a degree lower; yet nevertheless this losse becomes our gain, and this weakness makes us strong: so that hence we have abundant cause to blesse God in this Condition. And though the malice of our enemies



pursue us with terrible persecutions.  
 i Phi. i. 29. (i) To you it is given (saith Paul) not  
 to believe, but to suffer; whatsoever  
 given of God, deserves our thanks.  
 It is a great priviledge to be kept pure  
 and the people of God are never more  
 pure then under persecution. The  
 truth to which we bear testimony, and  
 for which we suffer, encrease and  
 spreads it self the more through our  
 sufferings. Therefore let's be advised  
 k I Pet. 4. 16. by the Apostle Peter, (k) That if  
 man suffer as a Christian, let him not  
 be ashamed, but let him glorify God in the  
 behalf. And although the sun-shine  
 of Gods beautiful aspect, seem so eclipsed,  
 that our spiritual condition is over-  
 clouded, yet it may be day when the  
 beames of the Sun do not appear, and  
 though it be dark without, there may  
 be light within. And this for our  
 future comfort is certain, that though  
 God may for a moment withdraw  
 His comforting presence from his  
 children, yet never his supporting pre-  
 sence; They still find that they have  
 that interest in him and that depend-  
 ance on him, that they would not



relinquish for all the world; and though they seem lowe, even lost and forsaken, for all this a gracious heart will not renounce the waies of his Saviour; so that here's plentiful matter for our praise and thanksgiving. And then further, it is an infinite mercy and well worth our thanks, that in all our temptations (though never so terrible and impetuous) we have a secure refuge to fly to, where we shall undoubtedly be relieved: (l) *He was in all things tempted, (saith the Author to the Hebrewes) that he might succour those that are tempted. (m) Christ bids be of comfort, for he hath overcome the world, he hath subdued Satan, and bound him up in chains, that he cannot stir a foot without permission from above, as is evident by that expression in St. Luke's Gospel, (n) Simon, Simon, (saith our Saviour) Satan hath desired thee that he may winnowe thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. If he had had power of his own, he would never have asked leave. Jesus Christ praies for us at the very instant of our temptation, and is that brasen serpent, that*

l He. 2. 18.

m Joh 16.  
33.

n Lu. 23.



cures us when we are stung. And though he suffer us sometimes to be  
 2 Co. 12. tempted, it is that we may not be (o)  
 7. *exalted above measure; to keep us humble, and preserve us from being split upon spiritual Pride, (a rock that would soon dash us in pieces.)* Temptation, as one well observed, is the souls rape, it may offer violence, and deflower our souls; but if we do not yield to it, it can never deprive us of our innocence. And how eminent a mercy it is to be kept *chaste* unto Christ, let every Christian judge. If then there be such just cause to praise God in these extremities; Certainly we shall meet with much more, in the daily blessings and favours that are dispensed to us, by the hands of our bountiful Father. But above all that can be thought on, was that eternal merit of God; in giving his dearly beloved Son, to suffer death for *our* transgressions, and that in the shamefullest, and severest manner that ever story made mention of, for no other end, but that we which were dead in trespasses and sins, might be made alive;



alive; that we which were *bondslaves*  
 to Satan, might be released from that  
 hellish thralldome; that we which  
 were vagabonds and aliens, might be  
 made heirs of that incorruptible and  
*Celestial* inheritance, that never was,  
 nor ever will be capable of *diminution*  
 or decay. All our *daies* are too few to  
 spend in praise for such a glorious  
*endearment* as this is; and yet we have  
 many more of a very transcendent  
 nature to draw forth our hearts in  
*thankfulnesse*. As that precious Gospel,  
 and written word of God, that toge-  
 ther with the *Holy Spirit*, conveys the  
 glad tidings of salvation to our *souls*;  
 that serves as a light to our feet, and  
 a *lantborn* to our *paibes*, that searches the  
 dark corners of our hearts, and makes dis-  
 covery of our grosse corruptions, and so  
 slaies them; that they may not rise up  
 in rebellion against us, to terrify us at  
 that great and generall day of *Judgment*;  
 whereto there will be an *universal Sum-*  
*mons*, nor any ways be able to contri-  
 bute to our condemnation. It is likewise  
 a great mercy and worth our thanks, that  
 our eyes behold our Teachers, that the  
 dores



dores of Gods Tabernacle are not shut up  
 That we have faithful Pastors, whose  
 endeavours are daily imployed to gather  
 us into that sheepfold, wherof Jesus Christ  
 is shepherd; and to break that bread  
 of life, wrapt up in the word & ordinances  
 and dispence it to our souls, for our  
 spiritual nourishment, whereby we are  
 further enabled to grow in Grace and  
 holynesse from one degree to another  
 till by that Celestial repast we attain to  
 an higher improvement and perfection. We  
 may also call for our thankful acknow-  
 ledgements that we are preserved from  
 peril and bodily danger, to which we are  
 lyable every moment. Should we be dealt  
 with according to our deserts, in respect  
 of our sins, every morsel we eat might be  
 mixt with poison, every shower that falls  
 from heaven, instead of rain, might be sul-  
 phur, and every flash of lightning, fire to re-  
 duce us to ashes; The very earth wheron we  
 tread, might open her bowels, and swallow  
 us quick for our rebellions, as it did (p) Cor-  
 1631. Dathan and Abiram. If we cast our eyes  
 into Holy Writ, and observe what fear-  
 ful judgements God hath inflicted on sin-  
 ners, and made them sudden examples

\*  
 \*  
 p Numb. as quick for our rebellions, as it did (p) Cor-  
 1631. Dathan and Abiram. If we cast our eyes  
 into Holy Writ, and observe what fear-  
 ful judgements God hath inflicted on sin-  
 ners, and made them sudden examples



of his justice, as (q) Lots wife for her  
 looking back was turned into a pillar of salt;  
 (r) Sodome for her pride, was destroyed  
 with fire and brimstone; (s) Jeroboam for  
 his burning incense, had his hand withered;  
 (t) Ely for suffering his children to abuse  
 the Priests office, had his neck broke; The  
 (u) children for mocking Elisha, were de-  
 voured with bears; (w) Jeshabel for oppres-  
 sing Naboth, was eaten with dogs; (x) Nadab,  
 and Abihu, for using prophane fire  
 upon the Altar, were consum'd with fire; (y)  
 Saul for disobeying Samuel, lost his King-  
 dome; (z) Zachary for his unbelief, was  
 stricken with dumbnesse; (a) Elymas for  
 hindering the course of the Gospel; with  
 blindnesse; (b) Gehazi, for taking bribes,  
 with leprosy; (c) Balshazzar, for propa-  
 nating the holy vessels; and (d) Ananias and  
 Saphira, for telling a ly were struk with  
 death; Yea and (e) Moses for trespassing  
 at the waters of Meriba, was shut out of  
 the Land of Canaan; And that we which  
 are guilty of as great enormities, and  
 yet suffered to live free from such pu-  
 nishments, is the mirrour of mercy,  
 and that which may justly exact praise  
 and

q Gen. 19.

26.

r Gen. 19.

24.

s 1 Kings

13.4.

t 1 Sam. 4.

18.

u 2 Kin. 2.

23, 24.

w 2 Ki. 9.

x Lev. 10.

1, 2.

y 1 Sam.

15.28.

z Lu. 1. 20.

a Act. 13.

11.

b 2 Ki. 5.

27.

c Dan. 5.

30.

d Act. 5.

10.

e Deu. 32.

48, 49, 50,

51.



and oblige us to blesse God, that he vouchsafes us an opportunity for that purpose. Further, that we have liberty, and not only so; but invitation and encouragement to pray and make *known* our wants, and acknowledge our unworthinesse, and solicit at the Throne of Grace for comfort and relief, is all rich matter for our thankfulness. It were an endless task to enumerate the multiplied occasions that are daily and hourly offered us, as monitors to this duty. Therefore let's resolve by the assistance of the Almighty, to draw forth our hearts and souls in all humble thankfulness, in all estates, and in all our conditions. Do we pray God in adversity? It is a meanes, to speak it with due reverence, to engage God to make us prosperous. *Do we praise him in prosperity?* It's a means to continue us in that state. *Are we lowe?* He will raise us, up. *Are we deserted?* He will enlarge us and shine upon us. *He that can blesse God, for that his eyes are opened to see his sins;* God will open those eyes to see



see their Saviour. Do we blesse God in affliction? He will make those afflictions blessings to us. A Christian that can praise and glorify God in adversity, shames Satan and utterly confounds that adversary: As one very well observes, upon this occasion, and instances in that of Job, where the devil saies unto God concerning him; [f] Do but touch him and he will curse thee to thy face: he is in thy hand, saith the Lord, only save his life; so Satan toucht him. What then? The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, saith Job, blessed be his Name. So that we see here is blessing instead of cursing. Job is of another temper then Satan thought him to be of. Thus is it evident how advantageous a thankful heart is upon all occasions: and we shal more easily attain to that temper, if we first consider the interest we have in a Saviour, and endeavour to maintain the assurance of our union with him; and to perswade our selves that all his dispensations proceed from love, and likewise that all things work together for our good; which is infallibly

f Job 1.  
11, 12. &  
21.



bly true in reference to all the Children of God. And lastly, let's be sure to maintain the sense of our own unworthynesse, both in respect of our emptynesse as creatures, and in respect of our sin as depraved creatures. *David* was herein a very great Proficient: for there was never any man more thankful then he, as is manifest by his whole booke of Psalmes, as before observed, being as it were, composed and made up of thankfulness; yet did never any one in the world expresse an higher sense of his own unworthynesse.

Therefore let his eminent example prevaile with us; and engage us to a conscientious Performance of this and all other Duties, that we have in Command from that inviolable Supream Authority of Heaven.

To close all, That the Domination of JESUS CHRIST may be Advanced, the Great Name of our GOD Eternally Glorified, and that our Immortal Soules may therein

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therein, ever see themselves satisfied  
and saved, is and ever shall be the  
earnest prayer of

From my Cham-

SIR,

ber this 7. of Aug.

1650.

*Your Devoted*

*and most faith-*

*full Servant*

R. WARDE.



### ERRATA.

Page 24. line 4. for fragile read frail, p 34. l.  
2 l. f. either r. rather: p. 44. l. 26. f. dever. r.  
never: p. 74. l. 24. f. doth r. to: p. 87. l. 3. f. e r.  
be: p. 114. l. 28. f. confidence r. confiden s: p.  
122. l. 10. f. was to, r. was it to.



